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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Rumblings In the Volcano

A German employer who knowingly hires illegal aliens may pay a fine as high as $20,000 or spend five years in jail. The moment of truth has come for President Carter; he must decide whether to include penalties for employer violators in the new immigration enforcement package he is bringing out shortly.

Failure to enforce immigration laws is a scandal. Illegal immigrants are pouring in over the Mexican border and the number already here about equals the total of US unemployed, around eight million. Still they come. It is partly a problem of the economic slump; it is partly the bigger problem of rich and poor nations.

Global population explosion—like nuclear proliferation—is a big, hazy problem that nobody wants to face. Maybe we won't face it, which is one way to deal with a problem. But we can at least sense what it means to let things slide. We got a glimpse of it when New York had its blackout, and outsiders watched the looting in comfortable chairs, by color television, with after-dinner coffee. Black and Hispanic teenagers were showing their contempt for the society that imposes on them a 40 percent unemployment rate. And many of the jobs they don't have are taken by illegal aliens here not only in New York but in other cities. In particular the blacks, who have been trying to fight their way up since slavery, are faced with a new illicit tide of low-wage competitors.

The population of the United States is only about five percent of the world's four billion. Five percent uses around 30 percent of all the world's energy. Can we maintain this fantastically favored position? Nobody knows. Are we morally entitled to it? That again is a matter of opinion. But at least the United States like most of the prosperous Western nations and like Japan and, yes, China, has imposed a voluntary slow-down of population. As standard of living has gone up growth of population has come down. It takes the pressure off diminishing global resources.

But this isn't true of the poorer countries. Every 24 hours the population equivalent of the city of Des Moines is added to the world population. If it goes on like this teeming spaceship Earth will have another four billion passengers in 30 years. But this isn't going to happen says Lester R. Brown, president of the privately funded Worldwatch Institute. He is sure of it. Hopefully he believes that world population growth will continue to slow down. (It's now around 1.9 percent.) Other demographers, less optimistic than Brown on voluntary restraint, note grimly that there's always pestilence, famine and war—the hideous riders who follow hungry hordes through history.

So let's come back to President Carter. For months he has delayed issuing his package of recommendations for getting illegal immigration under control. I understand that it should now come shortly. Meanwhile, a House committee under chairman Joshua Eilberg, Democrat of Pennsylvania, starts hearings this week on employer liability. Bills on this have passed the House before; the problem is the Senate.

Here are two big countries side by side, the United States and Mexico. The natural increase of US population has slowed down to .59 percent. Legal immigration, under laws which are the most generous of any industrial nation on earth, raises growth to .9 percent. But this doesn't include illegal aliens and immigration of one sort or another, legal or illegal, probably now supplies half of the total US population growth.

On the other side of the Rio Grande is Mexico. It hasn't enough jobs for its workers nor food for its hungry; as population has soared to 62 million it has taken to importing food, not exporting it. It has huge foreign debts. Inflation is about 30 percent. The estimated growth rate of 3.5 percent, higher than India's, will double its population in 20 years and make Mexico City the biggest city on earth, twice the size of London. What's the answer? Why, Mexico has oil; that will help. But meanwhile the pressure to get into the United States is almost irresistible.

"I believe that the rich countries will increasingly be *invaded* by those in the poor world who cannot find employment and attempt to seek it elsewhere,"

(continued on page 46)

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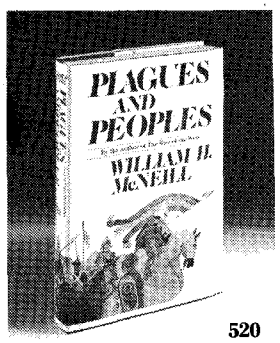

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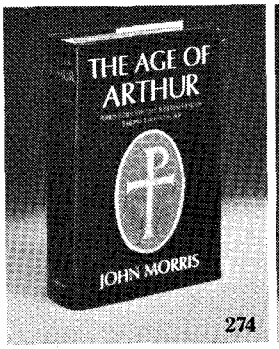

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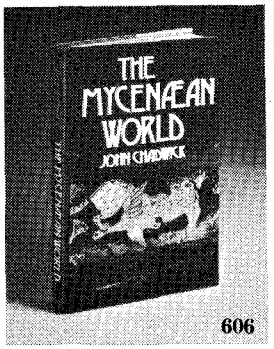

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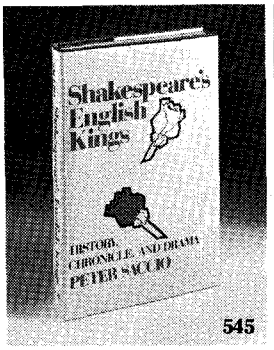

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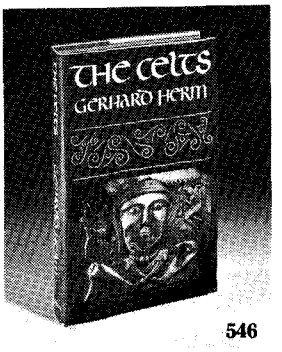

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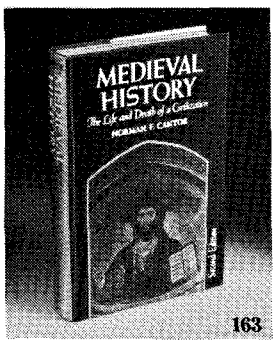

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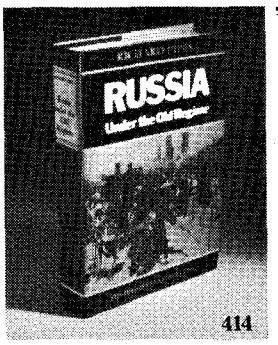

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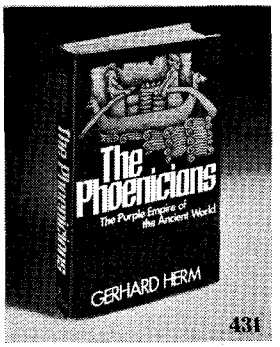

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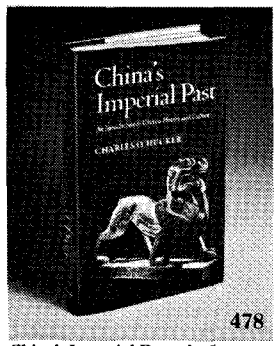

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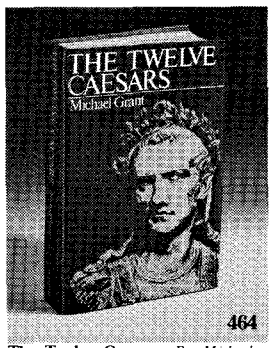

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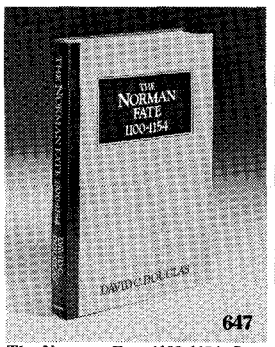

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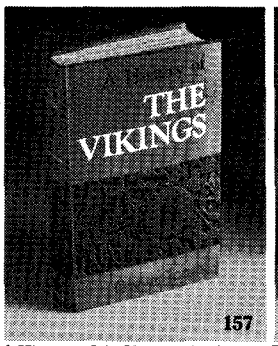

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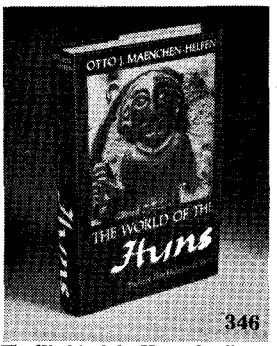

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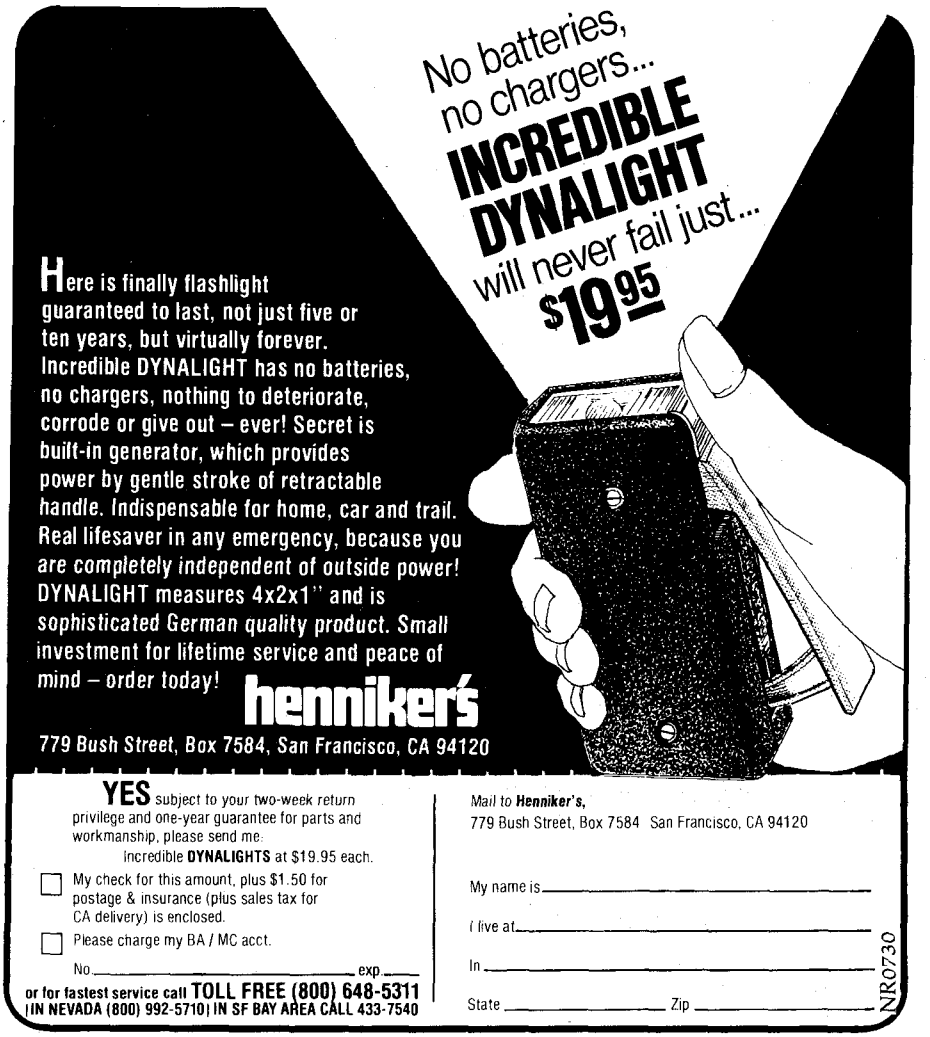
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

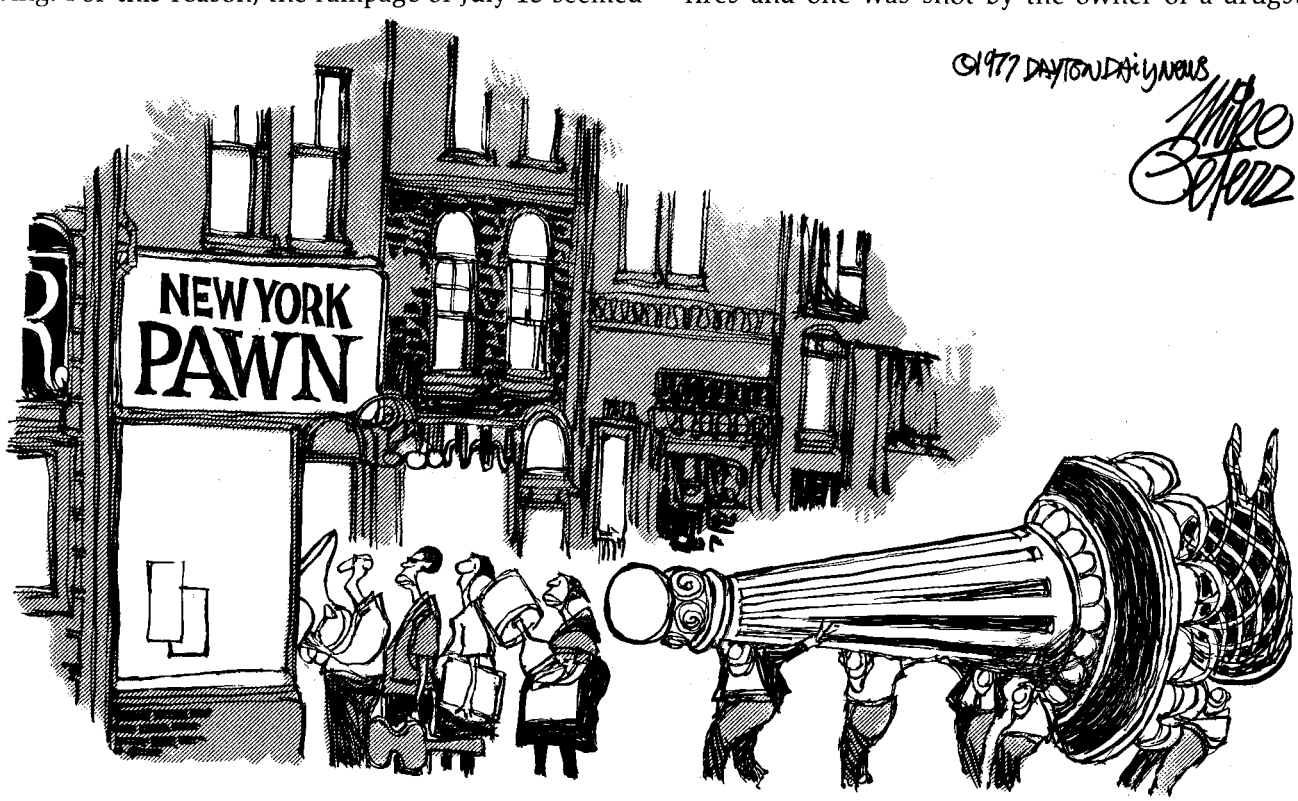
July 30, 1977

The Mugging of New York

It took 30 seconds to sink in, one bystander said, and then people realized that the blackout meant there were no alarms, no floodlights, and no law. New York found itself in a disaster movie. Its protective shell of security was broken and a more primitive reality began seeping into the cracks. People were forced to rely upon their own resources, which meant that they passed the night in very different ways. Some went home to bed by candlelight and others went out on the prowl. Whole neighborhoods were made defenseless, and the big opportunity for plunder was not lost. As Mary McGrory put it, the city was mugged.

New York has earned a reputation as a mugger's city, a place where the petty criminal can make a decent living. For this reason, the rampage of July 13 seemed not really remarkable, just a bigger version of something that has happened before. But it was quite unlike the riots of the '60s. First, it was more businesslike. No one pretended that this was a skirmish in the great battle against injustice. Earlier rioters at least claimed that they were exacting a penalty for white racism or the murder of Martin Luther King. This time there was no ideological rasp in what the looters said to reporters. They seemed intent on their work, which was not to destroy buildings or vent their outrage, but to remove as many valuable items as possible as quickly as possible.

The blackout rampage differed from earlier riots in another way: fewer people were killed. Three died in fires and one was shot by the owner of a drugstore



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when trying to break in. In 1967, by contrast, 43 people were killed in Detroit and 23 in Newark. The low mortality rate probably is attributable to instructions to the police not to use their guns. This represents a modest amount of progress, an increase in the value of life. But the property loss this time was correspondingly bigger: more than 2000 stores were sacked, a billion dollars worth of damage and theft, and 3700 looters crammed into the city jails, at that only a fraction of those eligible for arrest.

A final distinction is that while the riots of the '60s may have helped jolt the country out of its complacency about racial discrimination, it is hard to see any desirable result coming out of this one. No "evil be my good" this time around. How do you rally 'round the mugger's cause? President Carter as of this writing has refused to consider the city a disaster area, thereby denying the federal relief that places hit by natural disasters normally get. Mayor Abraham Beame is trying to start up a private fund to revive business in the inner city, but he has not gathered many dollars. His private campaign, however successful, will not make up for the loss of confidence. The Small Business Administration will give some additional help, but only in the form of loans, and only to applicants who meet its credit criteria. Sympathy is running low.

There has been no clamor since July 13 to revive the war on poverty in New York. The lack of concern is chilling but understandable. It does not reflect a new miserliness so much as a profound skepticism about the value of money transfer programs. People have begun to think that New York's problems are not the kind that can be solved by spending money. If they were, the reasoning goes, then New York would be the most problem-free city in the world. No city has been more generous in terms of the amount of money or the variety of programs it has offered to help the poor. None paid its public servants better. None was more generous with its education system; New York City even opened its university to all residents. Thousands of lives may have been made better by this generosity, but there is no evidence that the sum total of poverty and violence were reduced, and those are the curses of New York.

Two years ago the city's fortunes took a turn for the worse. A bond sale failed because the city finances were weak. And then state and federal officials closed in, pointing out that the city's generosity was being financed by bookkeeping shenanigans that amounted to borrowing against the future. The future, they announced, had arrived. During the recession, President Ford refused to bail the city out of its financial crunch, and other politicians scolded it for profligacy. The point was driven home. New York was forced to trim back its lifestyle and get along on a leaner diet of subsidies. The struggle to keep the city alive since then has been extraordinarily difficult. The outlook was improving slowly until last week. Then the blackout and riot undermined the small amount of good news Mayor Beame has managed to put out in the last year or so. Despite everything that had been done in the last decade, New York's poor seemed if anything more desperate and dangerous than before. Whether they realize it or not, the looters dealt the city a crushing blow from which it will not soon recover.

One reason Jimmy Carter may not rush in with fresh dollars to swab the streets is that the federal government has been forced to entertain many insistent demands for cash from all around the world since 1973, and as a result, it seems to have hardened its views on philanthropy. The chief provocation was OPEC's decision to break contracts with Western oil companies and increase prices by about 400 percent in 1974, a mugging on a really grand scale. Ever since then, the US has been in negotiations with other countries that want concessions similar to those OPEC got. This roughing up in the international market not only has weakened the American position abroad, but also has reduced the amount of money available for spending on domestic schemes, including programs for feeding, educating and hiring people in the cities. It is not an exaggeration to say that OPEC's rise has been New York's decline. Unfortunately, it is easier for the government to be tough with New York than to be tough with OPEC, so that with every international setback, the city suffers doubly—once for its own sins and once again for the world's "new economic order."

Jack Watson, the President's liaison with state and local governments, announced last week that the Administration would be willing to make available a fund of five million dollars to help rehabilitate the businesses wiped out in the looting. This is a piddling sum. The President will have to do better, and there have been some encouraging hints that he will do better in a short time.

The looters represent a more important and much more difficult problem than the merchants. Something will have to be done for them too. The government need not swoop down in a mission of mercy, but it cannot afford to ignore them. They are a symptom of deep distress. President Carter must begin to put into effect his central campaign promise, the one in which he pledged to find jobs for the unemployed—and particularly for teenagers in the city who never have had a job. These are, of course, the people who present the severest threat to New York's hopes for survival. They cannot be swept aside and left to moulder in the back streets. They must be brought into the mainstream of city life where they will mix with skilled workers—not permanent welfare cases—and be given a vested interest in the orderly functioning of society. It is essential that the jobs provided to them be real ones, the kind that businessmen like to call "productive jobs." The effort will have been wasted if they are merely sent out into the park—a squad of misfits with the plastic

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Selzer Update

To the editors:

"Brouhaha in Brooklyn, Finis" (*TNR*, May 28) tempts me to quote Mark Twain on the subject of exaggerated reports. The action by the Department of Political Science regarding my promotion and tenure was by way of a recommendation to the college president, Dr. John Kneller, who will decide the matter sometime this Fall. Since President Kneller is not bound either in theory or in practice to follow departmental recommendations it is not a foregone conclusion that I will be leaving Brooklyn College.

I am deeply grateful to you for your attention to this troubling matter—and to many of your readers who in the past few months have written directly to me with expressions of support.

Michael Selzer
Brooklyn College

Begin Update

To the editors:

I was delighted by Eric Breindel's objective and even sympathetic portrayal of the new Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin ("Begin Without Smears," *TNR*, June 18). Three slightly mentioned but significant points require clarification, however:

1) Deir Yassin was anything but an "indefensible wartime atrocity." The Irgun warned the populace of that town prior to attack and met fierce house-to-house resistance, suffering a 40 percent causalty rate during the foray. One can understand that if the only way to remove a sniper from a hut is to detonate a hand grenade through the window, it is unfortunate but hardly atrocious if civilians who chose to remain are harmed in the process. In any event, the best response to anyone who seeks to draw a meaningful conclusion from the episode need only be asked to name a second "massacre." Such conclusions should be drawn from the rule, not the exception.

2) The Land of Israel Movement is not "right wing." It is a cross-ideological group established in 1967 by stolid Labor Zionists. Furthermore, Israel cannot by definition "annex" the "occupied territories." It was Israel that liberated the West Bank and East Jerusalem from illegal Jordanian occupation. The Jewish State cannot annex territory that has never enjoyed its own sovereignty since the regime of ancient Israel fell in 135 CE. From whom would it be annexing it?

3) Despite Mr. Breindel's generally supportive exposition, I am puzzled by his final deduction, namely that this nice fellow Begin will reverse himself on the principles for which he has stood for three decades. Why the unnecessary exercise in apologia since it is precisely Begin's principled prudence that can at long last bring peace to the Mideast. God forbid a softening to the position of the discredited Labor Party's foreign policy.

Robert Brown
New York, New York

Ethnicity comes of age

To the editors:

There is some substance in Irving Howe's "The Limits of Ethnicity" (*TNR*, June 25) but the article suffers from notable omissions. It is not really concerned so much with "ethnicity" as with "ethnic nostalgia." The latter refers to acculturated, usually middle-class persons who are attempting to rediscover their "roots."

"Ethnicity" is concerned with national or racial groups still reasonably close to their culture of origin. Such persons are often in conflict or confused about contrasting sets of values and traditions. The conflicts can be severe in ethnic families, particularly between husbands and wives and parents and children. Until the recent rise of awareness of "cultural pluralism" associated with a questioning attitude toward the "melting pot" concept, such persons were often uncertain about how to identify their problems and how to avoid falsifying themselves by claiming to be "American," just like anyone else. Now, the newly-sanctioned hyphenated labels—Spanish-American, Italian-American, Asian-American, etc.—provide an acceptable and public way of specifying one's location in the strains of the social structure.

While Howe recognizes the problem of self-definition, he gives it short shrift, and he altogether ignores the advantages accruing from the ethnic groups' newly acquired status in regard to human services. The demands for culturally and ethnically appropriate service—in schools, in welfare, in health, and particularly in mental health—have forced a new recognition on the part of providers of service of "ethnicity" as an item to which they must respond creatively.

"Main-stream" Americans have only recently started, hesitantly, to respond to such service demands. The process is not helped by discussing the "limits" of ethnicity before examining its practical requirements in depth.

John P. Spiegel, MD
Brandeis University

To the editors:

The subject of "ethnicity" has disturbed me ever since the word came into such popular—and misguided—usage. And until I read Irving Howe's article no one had ever really expressed my feelings about it.

I grew up a long time ago in a world where the melting pot was assumed to be a fine thing. The WASPs of that day knew their own roots; in the heterogeneous society of pioneer America that was the first mark of identification that new acquaintances expected of a man. And I suppose that the descendants of the pioneers usually assumed that the foreigners we knew would eventually be melted into a reasonable facsimile of ourselves, not counting on the fact that the melting process would entail mutual change. And it has. Except in the case of black people, who until recently were assumed to be unmeltable lumps, "ethnicity" is a nostalgia for group differences that have almost entirely disappeared.

I was fortunate in growing up in time to know many 20th-century immigrants, to see something of Mr. Howe's *World of Our Fathers*. It was one of the great experiences of my small-town middle-western life. But they are gone now, and their children are like the rest of us. I hope their values, like those of the Puritans and the pioneers, are part of our national marrow, but they no longer divide us from one another.

Leila Engel
Bloomington, Indiana

(continued on page 46)

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We'd like to challenge those who say we have to live with a long-term shortage of energy. We say there are ample energy resources. We say those who claim we have to live with shortages are creating and extending the very shortages they warn against.

Sounds crazy, an oil company saying there is no energy shortage. But there isn't. There are enough resources in the earth, the sea, and the sun to run factories, to keep people warm, and to keep cars rolling. Our country, especially, has ample energy resources to continue strong economic growth and move toward its social and environmental objectives.

In terms of energy availability, there is no reason why the U.S. should consider massive changes in life-style or limit social progress. While oil imports will continue to be needed, geologists believe there is much petroleum yet to be found in the U.S., especially offshore. Coal reserves are enough to last 400 years at present rates of production. Nuclear and solar energy are virtually limitless.

What, then, is the energy problem?

In very simple terms, the problem is one of deliverability—the delivery of vital domestic energy has been held back by an array of government-imposed impediments. The energy crisis the present Administration seeks to resolve by further government involvement is a crisis that Washington helped create over many years.

Washington's mandated energy shortage

If the impediments that create today's deliverability crisis are not removed, the crisis will worsen. If more impediments are added, it will intensify even more. Political decisions will continue to dictate artificial shortages.

In part, we think this reflects a lack of knowledge in some Washington circles of the complexities of the energy business. But we also think that the underlying philosophy of many who propose mandated shortages has two premises:

1. They have concluded (inaccurately, we believe) that the social, environmental, and economic costs of delivering sufficient energy to you, the consumer, are too high.

2. They seem to believe that increased material well-being is morally wrong.

By mandating shortages, the proponents of these views can, through regulation, force changes in the way you live and work, and can compel you to conform to their view of what is an appropriate life-style.

By opting for shortages, politicians who accede to this view can evade the politically difficult decisions needed for resource development. They do not, for example, have to endorse the surface-mining of western coal, the accelerated building of nuclear plants, or the leasing of more offshore acreage for oil and gas exploration.

Are mandated shortages the right approach for America? The nation needs to focus on the real issues. First, what are the true social and economic costs of more extensive and rapid energy development? And second, what are the social and economic costs of energy shortages? **We believe that Administration energy advisors have grossly over-estimated the consequences of development and have grossly under-estimated the consequences of non-development.**

Making more petroleum available

Geologists have identified the areas off America's coasts as the most promising places to drill for significant discoveries of oil and natural gas. But those who prefer non-development argue that offshore drilling would pollute the oceans and the beaches.

The truth is that where offshore petroleum production has been allowed to proceed, mostly in the Gulf of Mexico and off California, the safety record has been excellent—only four major oil spills out of more than 21,000 wells drilled. All were promptly cleaned up, and there was no lasting damage. Even so, there have been these impediments to developing America's offshore oil and gas potential:

1. A slowdown of leasing. The current Administration has canceled or postponed several scheduled lease sales announced under President Ford.

2. Economic obstacles. While the proposed national energy plan pays lip service to the concept of "replacement cost," it envisions a system of price controls and new taxes on oil. These would raise the price paid by the consumer, but would leave the producer with about $5 a barrel for oil that will cost him perhaps $10 to replace. Meantime, the search for oil

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gets more expensive. How long can any business survive this way? Newly discovered oil should be decontrolled to provide adequate incentives for exploration in deeper waters in more hostile climates. If Congress determines at a later date that external forces have caused unreasonable price increases, it can reimpose controls.

3. Unreasonable litigation. Lawsuits have been a favorite tool of those who oppose offshore development. One example shows how this technique creates delay. Last summer, the government held its first Atlantic lease sale, and seemed to open a new frontier to petroleum exploration. But coastal counties sued to void the sale, and were upheld by a federal judge. An appeal is pending, but meanwhile time and money have been wasted. Interestingly enough, in polls of residents of coastal communities the majority favored offshore oil development.

Only by removing these impediments can America develop more domestic petroleum.

Making more nuclear power available

The Administration has noted that the lead time for building a nuclear power plant in the U.S. has been stretched (mostly by the need to comply with extensive hearings and environmental impact statements) to an appalling 10 years, compared with 5 years in Japan. One New Hampshire plant that's been in the news lately is a classic example. Permits have been granted, appealed, revoked, appealed again, and reissued.

Four years ago, the experts were predicting total nuclear generating capacity in this country by 1985 at 280,000 megawatts. They've since cut that figure in half—barely enough to meet eight percent of 1985's expected energy demand. While there are theoretical elements of risk in nuclear power production, there has *never* been a nuclear power plant disaster, despite more than 204 plants operating in the U.S. and around the world. Instead of running short of electricity, wouldn't it be better to arrive at a sensible government policy that would let atomic power proceed within the framework of well-defined, acceptable safety and environmental precautions?

Making more coal available

The Administration's energy program calls for increasing coal production from last year's 660 million tons to 1.2 billion tons by 1985. With eastern mines unlikely to meet this goal, the emphasis must be on coal in the West, where half of the nation's deposits lie, but which accounts for only 20 percent of current production. But western coal means surface-mining, and the shortage-creators in Washington are thwarting development with red tape that can stretch over two years before a mine can be built. Then, too, their program would require most utilities to install "scrubbing" equipment to remove sulfur content from coal, even though some coal is low in sulfur. So you, the consumer, are hurt two ways. You're being denied plentiful low-sulfur western coal; and you are required to pay for scrubbers which may be totally unnecessary.

The consequences of non-development

We believe the consequences of development have been grossly exaggerated by the shortage-creators; we doubt they have thought enough about the impact of non-development. We believe they would involve:

1. Damage to the chances of underprivileged Americans to extricate themselves from ghettos and rural slums.

2. A denial of the energy needed to clean the environment.

3. Increased dependence on foreign oil, already close to 50 percent.

4. Government-mandated changes in the lifestyles of most Americans.

5. Battles among different regions of the U.S. over available energy.

The real challenge: Increasing energy supply

Here are the real issues America must face in the debate over energy:

1. There really is no long-term shortage of energy. The problem centers on the deliverability of domestic energy.

2. Deliverability is hampered by impediments that government has placed in the way of getting energy to you, the consumer.

3. The adverse results that will flow from the non-development of domestic energy are far worse than the adverse consequences of development.

4. Some energy planners would aggravate the artificial shortages in order to increase government regulation over the way Americans exercise their traditional freedom of choice.

We believe that when the American people understand these issues, the nation will be much better equipped to hammer out the national energy policy that's so badly needed and so long overdue.

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litter bags. There is no other way, except by mixing them in with competent peers, to knit up the gap that is daily growing wider between the city's hard core poor and the productive majority. This is a task that will require patience and tolerance in greater quantities than money.

It will also require something that liberals have been reluctant to demand, though they know that without it the reservoir of patience and tolerance (and money) will not be available. That demand must be addressed to the black political leadership. They no longer can simply speak the words of defiance and retribution from the black community to the rest of us; that they also must speak to the black community and work within it. Cohesive values and personal ambition among the poorest blacks are not gifts which the white majority can bestow. This is not a chintzy cop-out disguised as theory. It is a harsh reflection on the politics of imputed guilt.

There are large enclaves of the poor and, especially to the point, various ethnic enclaves of the black poor, in which the squandered life has not been accepted as a law of nature, in which the rip-off has not been recognized as life's best compensation. There are too many hardworking men and women, with hopes for their children, and homes for their hopes, to allow the pathologic process of individual and communal disintegration to go on. The sociological explanation, too often intended and taken as justification, will not do. It is, in any case, much too facile, indiscriminate and debilitating. But inner corrosion cannot be stopped from outside the black community, and political psychodrama within it will only provide a new stimulus.

"Whites lecturing blacks again." We already feel the heat. That is one of the prices of candid fraternity.

Special Rules for the Shah

President Carter already has failed a major test of his resolve to restrict arms sales to foreign governments. Now it is up to Congress to save Carter's policy for him. Congress has only until August 6 to block Carter's proposed $1.2 billion sale to Iran of seven sophisticated airborne radar systems.

The AWACS, or Airborne Warning and Control System, is a modified Boeing 707 airliner that monitors and controls air warfare. A group of senators led by Democrats John Culver of Iowa and Thomas Eagleton of Missouri opposes the AWACS sale to Iran, claiming it would constitute a needless security risk. The Soviet Union has a land border of 1200 miles with Iran. If the Russians somehow were to gain access to the AWACS, Soviet defenses and intelligence capabilities could be enhanced, and electronic countermeasures against US and NATO AWACS could be developed. The senators also worry that the AWACS sale would require more American technical support. Even if Americans already resident in Iran were able to provide all the advice needed, their involvement could mean American support for an Iranian war.

Finally the opposition contends that selling the radar system to Iran contradicts the policy President Carter announced May 19 to deescalate arms sales. In that announcement, Carter declared one way the reduction in foreign arms sales was to occur: the US will not be the first to introduce into a region new or significantly higher combat capability. The AWACS sale would be a definite exception. AWACS is foreign to that area of the world, and its ability to function as an offensive weapon may upset the balance of power in the Middle East and Indian Ocean areas. Since the AWACS acts as an airborne command and control center, it could multiply offensive power of the aircraft already owned by Iran. The AWACS would be another asset in Iran's growing military arsenal, an arsenal that already is seen as a threat by neighboring nations.

Although not mentioned by the senators, selling the AWACS to Iran would contradict another of President Carter's policies: his stand on human rights. Carter has refused to help those countries whose standards of political freedom do not meet his own. The sale of AWACS to Iran seems to be a violation of this principle.

Iran has recently made some cosmetic changes in its dictatorial regime. The systematic torture of prisoners may have been restricted. A few people incarcerated for political reasons recently were freed. But the Shah's autocratic reign continues. Both the United Nations International League for Human Rights and Amnesty International have documented Iranian violations of the most basic human rights. The detention of Iranian citizens without due process of law, frequent executions of political prisoners, repression of all opposition to the Shah's government, restriction of press and speech and persecution of Iranians throughout the world by the Iranian secret police (SAVAK) are just a few of the rights infringements that have been reported.

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The Carter Administration has barred arms sales to Uruguay and Chile, ostensibly because of human rights violations. What is so much less offensive about the Shah's regime?

Clearly Carter's human rights doctrine and his new arms sale policy are not even factors in the AWACS decision. Perhaps a new policy should be issued: where oil is at stake, anything goes. If the Shah wants AWACS, the Shah gets AWACS.

'No Frigidaire'

The New Republic last week published an account of the controversy surrounding charges by the *Sunday Times* of London that the Israeli government systematically tortures Palestinian prisoners. The most serious *Sunday Times* allegation concerned "a cold box with spikes on the floor, constructed so that the prisoner can neither sit down nor stand up," which the paper's sources called the "frigidaire." We pointed out that the official Israeli answer to the accusations did not specifically deny this particular item. A spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry, in response to cabled inquiries, stated on July 15 that "The so-called frigidaire, or anything remotely like it, does not exist and never has. Our general denial of the Insight Team's wild and false allegations was certainly intended to cover this equally preposterous charge."

White House Watch

Carter's Shuffle

A. D. Frazier, Jr., the Atlanta bank lobbyist who directed a study leading to the reorganization of the President's White House staff and executive office, was about to summarize the results of that endeavor for a reporter when he got a telephone call a few minutes after 3 pm on Wednesday, July 13. "Mrs. Carter wants to discuss what we are doing to her staff," he said in a slightly shaken voice, "and she wants to see me NOW." Frazier's study group proposed to reduce Rosalynn Carter's staff from 23 to 20 persons. She protested first to him and then to her Jimmy that she simply could not afford to lose a single member of a staff that, she argued, was already too small to conduct what amounted to a miniature White House operation with nothing like the backup support that the President's much larger staff enjoys. According to Mary Hoyt, Mrs. Carter's press secretary and staff director, Jimmy Carter sympathized with his wife but told her that she probably would have to give up one or two people. The next afternoon, again at around 3 o'clock, Mrs. Carter telephoned Frazier and they talked for 20 minutes. When they finished Frazier telephoned his immediate superior at the Office of Management and Budget, Harrison Wellford, and told him that Mrs. Carter had "very graciously" accepted a cut from 23 to 21 persons. She had agreed, it turned out, to dispense with a calligrapher on the social entertainment staff and a junior administrative assistant on Mary Hoyt's press staff.

At the moment when Rosalynn Carter was arguing with Frazier in her office in the East Wing of the White House, her husband was listening to three visitors in his Oval Office in the West Wing. They were his appointees to the Council on Environmental Quality, a research, advisory and coordinating body that Congress forced upon Richard Nixon in 1969 and that the Frazier group proposed to transfer from the Executive Office of the President to the Interior Department. Chairman Charles Warren, a former California lawyer, and two other dedicated environmentalists on the council, Marion Edey and J. Gustave (Gus) Speth, spent 35 minutes putting to the President the arguments for keeping CEQ in the executive office that he had previously heard from such congressional advocates as Senator Henry Jackson and Representatives Lester Wolff, Marion Edey's former employer, and Morris Udall, not to mention various environmental groups and lobbyists. The major argument of Warren, Edey and Speth was that the ramifications of environmental policy cut across so many bureaucratic and interest lines that a President needs a coordinating body which can, among other things, provide an independent channel of information and a broader view than he is likely to get from such operative organizations as the Environmental Protection Agency and, indeed, the Department of Interior to which he was being urged to consign CEQ. Rather gently, but implicitly threatening to quit, they also reminded Carter that they had no inkling that they might be removed from the presidential orbit when they accepted their appointments from him. One of the President's senior White House assistants gathered that the reminder was decisive. Warren, Edey and Speth were told within hours after they left the President that he was going to keep CEQ in the Executive Office. The council accepted a staff reduction from 40 to 32, on the understanding that the work done by the eight lost employees would be transferred with them to other agencies.

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When OMB Director Bert Lance, Associate Director Wellford and Frazier tried to explain this, the first of many promised Carter reorganizations, at the White House on July 15, Frazier was astonished by what he considered to be the ferocity of press questions implying that the President's and his spokesmen's claims of a 28 percent reduction in the White House Office staff and a 15 percent reduction in the executive office staff were phoney. In fact the briefing was depressingly tame and unproductive, partly because many of the questioners didn't understand the subject. The claims of cuts in the President's immediate WHO staff from 485 to 351 "permanent positions" and of the executive office from 19 to 10 units and from 1712 to 1459 employees were technically accurate, but upon informed examination the reductions were less impressive than they were made to seem. The official fashion was to deplore media preoccupation with numbers and the minimal attention given a serious effort to rationalize and improve presidential decision processes. These complaints got no sympathy from me. The President harped on the cuts in his remarks at the reorganization announcement session and in the message to Congress accompanying his statutory reorganization plan, in effect inviting the press to emphasize the politically profitable numbers game that he was playing. He also noted the "careful, systematic study" that preceded this attempt to develop at the White House "a more orderly system for collecting information and advice," but he had no right to be surprised and probably wasn't when this part of the performance was generally overlooked or minimized.

Carter's continuing fascination with government reorganization exemplifies the extent to which positions he has taken as President were predetermined by positions he took and promises he made as a candidate for nomination and election. "Over the last two years," he said June 29 when announcing four long-range reorganization studies, "there has been no theme that I have emphasized more often than a need to reorganize the federal government. The American people overwhelmingly support this idea and that's one reason I was elected President." In the popular mythology, keeping campaign promises is good and obligatory and I'd probably be among those denouncing Carter if he reneged on this one. But the extraordinary number of substantive domestic and foreign policy positions to which he seems to feel bound by campaign commitments made long before he had access to the knowledge and expertise available to Presidents is disturbing. It's as though he had preprogrammed himself and doesn't know how to re-instruct the computer.

Another aspect of his character and behavior that his reorganization kick dramatizes is his skill at obfuscation, the art of appearing to promise more than he really promises. Of the total reductions of 424 WHO and EOP jobs projected in the first reorganization, less than 150 represent real terminations and real displacement of those holding the jobs. The rest are to be resolved by transfers to other jobs, some 150 of them within the White House establishment by transfer to a new Central Administrative Unit in which many presently dispersed supply, accounting, personnel and other services are to be concentrated. Whether they are tabbed for transfer to other jobs or not, federal employees in the White House and elsewhere are entitled to believe they have Carter's absolute assurance that they won't lose out because of reorganization. They don't. When an official in the White House personnel office told me that the President's guarantee against discharge or demotion applied only to employees with civil service status and tenure, I told him the President had made no such distinction between them and non-civil service officials and employees. The personnel official was right. During a round of informal remarks to the employees of federal departments in February, Carter frequently brought up reorganization and occasionally gave the sort of unqualified promise he made at the Agriculture Department February 16: "No one will be demoted, have their salaries decreased, or be fired as a result of reorganization. You need not fear that." Usually, though, as at the Labor Department on February 9 and HEW on February 16, he subtly qualified what sounded to the casual listener like unqualified pledges of job security with references to "professional employees," "seniority," "pay status," and "professional, competent civil servants." Few if any of those displaced by the modest White House-executive office reductions will be done out of some federal job. The point is that Carter is not committed to see that they aren't to the extent that he is understood to be.

Many of the senior White House assistants with rank enough to have assistants under them had the same kinds of arguments with the Frazier study group and with the President over proposed staff cuts that Rosalynn Carter had. Carter said this part of the exercise was difficult for him "because of the closeness of myself to the people involved." He increased the basic WHO staff total from the 340 proposed by the Frazier group to 351. Probably the most successful of the appellants was Peter Bourne, the special assistant for health affairs, who resisted transfer from the White House, got authority for five personal assistants he hadn't had before, and did not, contrary to general report, oppose eventual abolition of the Office of Drug Abuse Policy and its staff of 10 which he's headed without much enthusiasm since Carter established it in response to heavy congressional pressure. Probably the most pleased assistant was Stuart Eizenstat, the domestic affairs adviser, who welcomed replacement of the Domestic Council setup inherited from Nixon and Ford with a new, somewhat enlarged Domestic Policy Staff. A formalized system of policy review and determination recommended by the study group is patterned after the National Security Council system,

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which Carter has found more to his liking than the rather haphazard domestic procedure followed in the first six months. Eizenstat prevailed over the Frazier group in one very important respect: he insisted and convinced the President that he and his staffers cannot be totally neutral communicators between the President and the principal departments and agencies, but must be not only free but expected to convey their own views to the President along with departmental and agency views.

Probably the most aggrieved assistant was Cabinet secretary Jack Watson, who felt that a change affecting him and his staff of 12 (nominally reduced by one but actually to be increased by one) had been misreported. The paper flow between Cabinet officials and the President, hitherto routed in separate channels through both Watson and staff secretary Rick Hutcheson, hereafter and initially moves only through Hutcheson. But Watson is not cut out of the Cabinet traffic, as reported: he and his staff continue to "vet" Cabinet paper before it goes to the President or from the President to the departments. Greg Schneiders, one of three free-wheeling special assistants who in the Frazier group's opinion needed more supervision than they were getting, is joining Watson's intergovernmental relations operation, primarily to coordinate federal action in such domestic crises as floods and earthquakes. That is Carter's idea.

Undoubtedly the most flattered assistant in the aftermath of the study was Hamilton Jordan, who was credited in print with having the exceptional modesty to decline a chance to be the President's chief of staff. Jordan was reported to have said he didn't want to be and wasn't fitted to be chief of staff. Frazier and Harrison Wellford of OMB did ask Jordan at one point whether they should offer Carter the option of creating a chief of staff and giving Jordan the title and responsibility. Jordan told them, and they agreed, that Carter had been so long and so thoroughly committed to the view that he didn't need and didn't want a chief of staff that offering that option would be pointless. Much in their findings and report suggested a need for more coordination and more order in the domestic policy process than they found at the Carter White House. But they didn't waste their time and standing by suggesting a chief of staff, perhaps partly because of their knowledge that Jordan comes nearer than his colleagues might suppose to being one without the formal designation.

The most abashed and humiliated figure in the exercise was Carter's friend, banker and fellow Georgian, OMB Director Bert Lance. The Frazier study group recommended transfers of function and staff from OMB to other agencies that Lance not only opposed but, in some instances, omitted from the summary of the recommendations that he submitted on the group's behalf to Carter. White House assistants who were aware of this fact grumbled that Lance was protecting his own fief while raiding theirs. Carter gave Lance his comeuppance. At a senior staff meeting shortly before the President's decisions were announced, Carter noted that the proposal before him seemed soft on OMB and bluntly ordered Lance to get adequately tough with his own agency. The result was more transfers and cuts in OMB than Lance had approved and proposed and a reduction of 139, from 709 to 570, in OMB personnel. OMB's essential functions were unimpaired and it remained the biggest and most powerful unit in the executive office. But Lance, already beset by personal business and financial troubles, had suffered a rebuke that nobody in Washington thought possible before it happened.

John Osborne

It was all smiles on Begin's visit last week.

Jimmy and Menachem

by Morton Kondracke

Beginning with his Inaugural address, President Carter has been setting international goals for himself which, were he to fulfill them, would make him one of the real giants of our era. He would be a maker of peace, a healer of hatred, reconciler of races, guardian of liberty, beater of swords and craftsman of ploughshares. He would be Albert Schweitzer, Ralph Bunche and Woodrow Wilson—a veritable Pope John XXIII in

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dungarees. The goals are undeniably worthy, but on many fronts Carter is finding problems yield less easily to the statesman's hand than to the speechwriter's pencil. As his first six months in office ended last week, Carter could not be sure of success in limiting strategic arms, expanding human rights, preventing an explosion of blood in Africa or even negotiating a new Panama Canal treaty. Six months may be too short a time in which to produce miracles. But having raised so many high expectations, Carter ought to have some diplomatic accomplishment to show for his first year in office.

Of all the troubled places in the world, Carter has devoted more time, effort, rhetoric and prestige to the Middle East than to any other. He virtually has made progress toward peace in that region a measure of his foreign policy acumen. United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young has proclaimed 1977 to be the Year of the Middle East, and Carter told one congressman, Sidney Yates of Illinois, that he wants to get the Middle East peace process in motion this year in order to turn his attention to other matters in 1978. So with his first year half over, it was natural that President Carter should attach some urgency to his meeting last week with Israel's new Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and he did. "This is a very important day in the history of our nation," were Carter's first words to Begin at the White House, "and I think perhaps for the future of the Middle East and perhaps even for the future of the world."

Whatever its ultimate place in national, regional and world history, the Carter-Begin meeting seems to have produced worthwhile immediate results for both leaders. The two of them worked out a good trade. Carter helped Begin shed and bury his image as a terrorist and extremist, declaring him to be "a man who has shown superlative personal courage . . . a man of deep convictions and unshakeable principles . . . a man of truth and quiet dignity." By welcoming Begin into the community of world statesmen and demonstrating that the "special relationship" between the US and Israel will continue, Carter helped Begin consolidate his power at home. When Begin returns, he probably will be able to conclude arrangements to bring soldier-archaeologist-reformer Yigal Yadin and his Democratic Movement for Change into the ruling coalition. This will add a more dovish lilt to the Likud's song.

Begin, in turn pronounced Carter "a great friend of Israel," thereby repairing Carter's dangerously deteriorating position with the American Jewish community. An Israeli government spokesman added, "Begin is in love with Carter." More important, Begin did what was necessary to keep Carter's Middle East diplomacy afloat. He said he would negotiate with the Arabs about anything and threw up a veil of "not talking" around the places where Israel will refuse to budge. It was enough for Carter to say that he was satisfied. One Arab diplomat joked sourly afterward, "I think Carter would have been happy if Begin had brought in a dead fish and hit him with it."

The Begin-Carter meetings were in marked contrast to Carter's talks in March with former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Apparently there has been a shift in administration tactics—if not strategy—concerning the Middle East. Carter's pattern with Arab and Israeli visitors has been to hold a morning business meeting and a large working dinner for official parties from both countries on the first day of a visit, and then to retire with his principal guest for a two-man chat in the White House family quarters. American officials say that in these sessions Carter exacted assurances from King Hussein of Jordan and President Sadat of Egypt that the Arabs would go much further in establishing peaceful relations with Israel than any Arab has acknowledged publicly. Carter attempted to win similar private assurances from Rabin about Israel's willingness to return Arab territory captured in the 1967 Six Day War, but Rabin reportedly stuck to the formal (*i.e.*, vague) positions his side had presented in earlier working sessions. Carter reportedly ended up lecturing Rabin that Israel would have to return to its 1967 borders. The next day, Carter went public with the demand, beginning a near crisis in American-Israeli relations.

The Rabin meeting took place at a time when administration expectations were rising about what might be achieved this year in the Middle East. In February, Carter had been content to predict that the Geneva Conference might be reconvened this year to begin working out a settlement. Gradually, however, more ambitious plans began to be laid within the administration. In advance of Geneva, it was said, an agreement might be worked out on principles governing a final Middle East settlement—principles extending beyond United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, "fleshing out" those resolutions to include more explicit promises of territory for the Arabs, peace for the Israelis and identity for the Palestinians. It was anticipated that, having affirmed these principles at Geneva, negotiators would form subcommittees to devise steps toward a final Middle

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East settlement.

In the Carter Administration, the process of thinking inevitably leads to the process of talking. Soon it began to appear to Israel that the United States had a plan in mind for the Middle East that resembled in its essentials the detested Rogers Plan of 1970. Israel would have to return to its 1967 borders, with minor modifications, in return for American-guaranteed peace assurances from the Arabs. Carter added that the Palestinian people should have a "homeland," presumably in the West Bank.

It is widely believed in Israel, that Carter's talk undermined the moderate Rabin and clinched Begin's upset election victory May 17. Yet the Administration persisted in describing its conception of a final Middle East settlement. Vice President Walter Mondale, long considered one of Israel's strongest supporters in Washington, delivered a speech in California on June 17, repeating in softer language what Carter had said during Rabin's visit. Inevitably, this began to strike the Israelis and Jewish groups here as "*the* Carter plan" for the Middle East, even though Mondale said that Carter had no intention of imposing it. Shortly afterward, State Department spokesman Hodding Carter, III issued a statement suggesting the United States expected Israel to withdraw on "all three fronts"—Sinai, Golan and the West Bank.

The administration statements threatened to produce a fierce rift between pro-Israel forces and the Carter Administration. Pro-Israel lobbyists singled out national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski as their principal antagonist, accusing him of deliberately trying to provoke a confrontation between the United States and Israel. The Israel lobby began organizing its friends in Congress to assail the Administration. They met with notable success in both parties. An atmosphere of bitterness was developing that might easily have soured the Begin visit both for him and President Carter.

Carter and Brzezinski abruptly moved to reverse the drift—Carter with an invitation to the White House for leaders of major Jewish organizations, and Brzezinski with an interview published in Jewish newspapers around the country and reprinted by *The Jerusalem Post*. Both Carter and Brzezinski gave assurances that Begin would be received warmly, that Carter had no intention of imposing a peace in the Middle East and that any Palestinian "entity" created in the Middle East would emerge only from negotiations and probably should be linked with Jordan. Off in Israel, Begin began adopting his "everything is negotiable" stance and masking his earlier adamant determination that Israel would never give up the "liberated" territories of Judea and Samaria in the West Bank.

Carter and Begin seem to have read each other remarkably well, literally and figuratively. They read each other's autobiographies, and they understood how much room the other needed. Nevertheless, a little test occurred on the south lawn of the White House at Begin's arrival ceremony. Carter praised Israel's acceptance of 66 Vietnamese refugees picked up at sea, then delivered a veiled reference to the need for Israeli compassion for homeless Palestinian Arabs. When it came his turn to speak, Begin smacked the serve squarely back at Carter's conscience, reminding him how for nine months at the outset of World War II no nation would receive a shipload of 900 European Jews fleeing the Nazis, most of whom later died in concentration camps. That evening at dinner, another little test took place. Carter, toasting Begin, observed that "there is no way to postpone any longer those [Middle East] issues that some time in the future will be divisive, but which have historically been divisive either for 29 years or 2900 years." Begin responded: "We must have the sense of urgency, but we must have some patience," and referred to his own 29-year wait to assume power in Israel and Carter's four-year campaign for the presidency. Exactly what occurred when Begin and Carter retired to the family quarters is not yet known in the detail that has leaked about the Rabin meeting, but Israeli sources say what Begin experienced was nothing like Carter's previous lecturing or his insistence on knowing Israel's final positions on borders.

Along with a determination to avoid a confrontation with Begin, Carter has developed a more modest definition of progress toward peace this year in the Middle East. Mere convening of a Geneva Conference now seems to suffice, and the Administration apparently has abandoned any plans to get the Arabs and Israelis to agree on principles for a final settlement. It is not clear how even a Geneva Conference is possible, since Begin refuses to consider negotiating with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Arabs insist, publicly at least, that the PLO must be present. Despite the obstacle, Carter said he considers it "very likely" that the Geneva Conference will meet in October.

If the Geneva Conference does reconvene, it is unclear what will happen there. Begin proposed that the goal of negotiations should be individual peace treaties between Israel and Egypt, Syria and Jordan. It is now up to the Arabs to present their ideas, but clearly there are dangers that the conference could collapse in confrontation over the Palestinian issue or bog down into an endless series of wrangles. In the Carter Administration, though, most urgent attention is being given merely to getting the parties to Geneva and giving President Carter a diplomatic victory this year. Who can really blame Carter? Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho once patched together a Vietnam agreement that led directly to more bloody war, and they shared a Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts. It is hard to imagine Carter could do any worse.

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The trials of Marvin Mandel.

Trouble in the Boys' Club

by Anne Tyler

You can piece it all together from the *Baltimore Sun*, if you're willing to sit down with a few back issues. Here's this ordinary man, a low-key, pipe-chewing lawyer with a wife named Bootsie and two children. He grew up poor, selling newspapers at the Pimlico racetrack. He owns one green suit and a maroon sportcoat. You wouldn't guess it from his face (which is reassuringly benign, almost seraphic) but his clients are mostly characters on the Block—Baltimore's stretch of strip joints, massage parlors, and X-rated bookstores with peepshows in the back.

Then he falls into state politics, through a combination of circumstances. He knows the right people, he finds himself a seat in the House of Delegates. Then he's House Speaker. Then he's Governor—a little grayer, much better dressed, but still fond of an occasional kosher hot dog, still surrounded by the same old friends he's always had.

His friends. One looks like a stocky, pugnacious Columbo. Another has eyes like a lizard's, that appear to close in the middle. All are rich, but not so the Internal Revenue Service would notice. Their income depends upon certain bits of inside information, sudden government expenditures, suspiciously well-oiled glides through bureaucratic red tape. They draw much of their money from construction and racetracks—a combination that seems, at least from outside, as tough and sleazy and colorful as Baltimore itself.

Now, you have a good friend, the Governor figures—a fellow you've known half your life, gone fishing with, goose-hunting with—what's wrong with giving him a little boost, from time to time? A state contract here, a bit of legislation there? You've got to help each other out, in this world. Ease your friends' lives, and they'll ease yours: they'll send around a New York diamond cutter with a $4500 diamond and platinum bracelet for your wife. They'll pick up the tab for your visit to a menswear store in Florida—couple shirts, ties, a few suits: $1584.50. They'll hand you a little interest in some business ventures—free, or nearly free, but gifts can always be altered to look like payment for services.

Oh, accounts among the friends aren't all that closely calculated. It's just that occasionally, the Governor gets a dunning note from someplace, some little hotel or boutique that doesn't seem to understand these things, and he looks off in another direction a moment and the bill is somehow whisked away from him. A matter of caretaking, you might call it. What else are friends for?

But this has been a men's story, so far. (You don't find much talk of Bootsie.) And men's stories always have the same twist: a woman arrives, and trouble begins. The clubhouse falls to pieces. We could tell this part of the plot in our sleep.

So here comes this blond, divorced, from a lofty old Eastern Shore family. (Ah, her family. It's the combination that gets him, we feel: her brassy, glittering hair, levitating about her head and then dripping in well-modulated scrolls; coupled with that Anglo-Saxon lineage. Later, he will spend their honeymoon searching the London museums for her ancestors.) Her ex-husband was in the state legislature. She herself has dabbled, at times, in real-estate selling—an occupation at once decorous and aggressive. She wears the sort of breezy, silken clothes that seem designed for lunch beside the golf course. She's irresistible.

Their courtship is not what is new in this story. That's been going on for years, or so we find out later. They've kept it quiet, but there've been some near misses. Back in 1971, that midnight auto accident in front of Rip's Restaurant and Motel. . . . It was touch-and-go, for a while. Where was the Governor coming from, at such an hour? But either Bootsie never found out or (some rumors have it) she did find out but was placated by the aforementioned diamond bracelet. All nonsense, Bootsie says later. "Do you think a woman like myself would be quiet for a diamond bracelet?"

No, we feel certain; not a woman like Bootsie. For when the Governor finally announces his divorce plans, Bootsie is far from compliant. She digs in her heels and stays on in the Mansion, alone. (The Governor moves to the local Hilton. State troopers are seen delivering his laundry.) She stays five and a half months, thereby losing much of the public sympathy she started out with. (We can identify with being wronged, but not with being undignified.) When she finally leaves, it's for a quarter-million-dollar divorce settlement, an air-conditioned Buick sedan, and a promise that her portrait will remain on the wall of the Governor's Mansion.

Maybe there was something to that bracelet story after all.

But the matter of the portrait, at least, is easily resolved. It has hung in the entrance hall, the end of a parade of first ladies. All you have to do is turn the parade around, send it up the stairs in the other direction, and Bootsie arrives on the landing, in the

Anne Tyler, the novelist, lives in Baltimore. Her latest novel, *Earthly Possessions*, is published by Knopf.

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The Mandel Saga (So Far)

April 19, 1920—Marvin Mandel is born in North Baltimore to an orthodox Jewish family. His father is a factory clothing cutter.

1935—Marvin meets Barbara Oberfeld. They date.

1941—Marvin marries Barbara. She calls him "Buddy"; he calls her "Bootsie."

1942—Mandel graduates from the University of Maryland School of Law. He enlists in the Army.

1946—Honorably discharged from the service, Mandel sets up private practice in Baltimore. Makes his reputation defending East Baltimore Street strip joint operators against the city obscenity law.

1950—Elected a justice of the peace.

1952—Elected to the Maryland House of Delegates.

1963—Becomes Speaker of the House of Delegates when the incumbent, Gordon Boone, is convicted and jailed in a savings and loan scandal.

1969—Elected governor by the Maryland General Assembly when Spiro T. Agnew is inaugurated as vice-president.

November, 1970—Wins full term with 67 per cent of the vote.

December 5, 1971—Mandel is involved in a post-midnight automobile accident in which one person is killed. He can't explain where he was coming from.

July 4, 1973—Marvin announces to the press: "I am in love with another woman, Mrs. Jeanne Dorsey, and I intend to marry her." Barbara refuses to leave the Executive Mansion. She says, "I think the strain of the job has gotten to him. . . . He should see a psychiatrist." Marvin moves out.

December 20, 1973—Barbara moves out. Marvin moves back in.

July 6, 1974—Barbara files for divorce on grounds of abandonment.

August 13, 1974—Barbara is granted the divorce. One half hour after the court announcement, Marvin and Jeanne are married.

October 8, 1974—At a crab feast, Mandel allegedly is given a check for $42,000 to help pay for his divorce settlement. The money allegedly has been laundered through the Pallatines religious order and is presented to the governor by the Very Reverend Guido J. Carcich, S.A.C.

November, 1974—Mandel is re-elected governor with 63 per cent of the vote. Leaves with Jeanne for a three-week vacation in Europe and Israel.

December, 1974—Leaves with Jeanne for a 10-day vacation in Florida.

January, 1975—Leaves with Jeanne for a Jamaica vacation aboard a corporate jet owned by Steuart Petroleum Company, which wants to build a controversial refinery in southern Maryland.

November, 1975—A grand jury delivers a 23-count indictment against Mandel and four Maryland businessmen who acquired the Marlboro Race Track in December 1971. Mandel is accused of having lobbied for legislation that would stimulate business at the Marlboro track in return for several hundred thousand dollars worth of gifts.

September, 1976—Trial number one begins in US District Court in Baltimore.

December 7, 1976—Mistrial is declared after two separate incidents of attempted jury tampering. Retrial is set for April 13, 1977.

February, 1977—Walter Weikers and Charles E. Neiswander are convicted of obstructing justice by jury tampering. No connection with Mandel or apparent motive emerges.

April 5, 1977—Mandel is admitted to Prince George's General Hospital apparently having suffered a mild stroke.

April 13, 1977—Retrial date is postponed to May 11.

April 27, 1977—Mandel is released from the hospital.

May 10, 1977—Retrial is postponed to May 31.

May 31, 1977—First day of retrial. Mandel stumbles on the steps of the courthouse. He claims later that he was pushed by newsmen into some television wires.

June 4, 1977—On advice of his doctors, Mandel transfers his official duties to Lieutenant Governor Blair Lee III for "an indefinite period of time."

dark. Simple.

Nor is that all that's rearranged, once the blond marries the Governor. There's the furniture, too. There's the garden. And there's the Governor himself.

Now he takes exotic trips, stays at exclusive resorts. The ketchup bottle is removed from the Mansion's dining table, and he develops a fondness for French cooking. He suddenly fancies Bordeaux with his meals. He likes to have the blond with him everywhere—not only at meals but also at private meetings, public meetings, and semi-political fishing trips.

Hear the mutters from the clubhouse.

She sends him secret signals in the middle of press conferences. She takes frantic notes during House debates. On every issue, she knows where she stands and she lets him know. She scolds his closest political associates, telling them to "keep their lips zipped"; she freezes out others entirely, assists still others to positions of power. Life gets as complicated as a Chinese emperor's court.

But the Governor seems not to notice. He is beatific. His friends say he's grown absent-minded, careless, that political matters no longer claim his full attention. Where once he seized on any excuse to stay out late with the boys, he is now unbecomingly eager to get back home to the Mansion. He has changed, his friends say darkly. He's not the same man, since She came along.

Now, it may seem our story is trailing off here into a trickle of petty gossip, but take heart. There is a link between the Governor's private life and his public life.

Forced to scrounge for money to pay his divorce settlement, but living suddenly in a style that implies inordinate wealth, edged into the public's (and the federal government's) eye by scandal, and newly out of favor with some of his more influential supporters, the

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Governor is much like an overturned turtle. The federal prosecutor's office, therefore, pounces. Or so the Governor sees it.

For he is still, despite the French food and the Bordeaux wine, an unsophisticated man, and he appears honestly bewildered that plain old friendship should land him in court like a common criminal. After all, hasn't he been a good governor? Doesn't he run a tight ship? There must be some mistake. He chews his pipe a while and ponders how this could have happened. He thinks it might be because he's a newcomer, not old stock, and because he's given a helping hand to other newcomers. He casts his mind back to times when he's been persecuted, harrassed—that liquor raid on the Block, a while back, where they found a snapshot of the Governor with an underworld figure and circulated it everywhere, giving people the wrong idea. But he's sure it will work out, he says. You'll see.

Arriving at the Courthouse, where he will be tried for 20 counts of mail fraud and one count of racketeering, he is still chewing his pipe. The blond has a tan. Her sons wears a T-shirt reading LUV THE GUV. A Baltimore fixture known as Mr. Diz takes it upon himself, as usual, to trumpet the arrival of all public figures appearing in court. There are plenty of them—but Maryland's grown used to that.

A spectator says, "At least it keeps us on the map."

The Courthouse can hold an audience of 46, and the seats are in great demand. Why wouldn't they be, for a trial that reads like an updated *Guys and Dolls*? There are fully grown witnesses with diminutives parenthesized at the centers of their names. There's Father Guido Carcich, no stranger himself to mail fraud, here to answer questions about 42,000 laundered dollars for Bootsie's divorce settlement. There's a jeweler who transacts his thriving business in cash, out of his coat pocket, and who testifies to receipt of over $3000 in a "lunch-looking bag with a rolled-over top" from a stranger in front of an airline counter.

He doesn't count the money then and there, though. "In the middle of the waiting room of the Pan Am Airlines," he says, "you don't do that."

We think this over, and we see his point. There are all sorts of rules and customs here that have not occurred to us—a whole world, meticulously organized. The trial, which has ceased to seem outrageous or even surprising, at least retains our interest because of this: a layer of life exists, occupying the same geographical space that our lives do, and we never even noticed, all this time.

Then the trial explodes. Somebody humdrum, a furniture salesman, no one you'd look at twice, has tried to bribe a juror. There is a lot of talk about "tainting" and "contamination." The prosecution says that to call a mistrial would give the shark in our midst exactly what he wants, but the judge calls a mistrial anyhow. Some members of the defense team go out to lunch afterward and toast "the shark," and one gives a sharky, snaggled-toothed grin and winks at the others.

So much for Trial Number One.

Now, Trial Number Two will be, you'd think, an anticlimax, for we've been through it once before, had our taxes spent for nothing, and on top of that there comes a time when the sight of the same old item in the newspapers can bring on actual nausea. This little Governor, with his natty clothes and his courtly manners, has carried things too far. His continued declarations of injured innocence are orderly and reasonable, and the commas come in all the right places, but we can't quite fix our attention on them. We wish he'd give up. We have, in fact, some of the same sense of weariness that we had during Bootsie's siege in the Mansion.

But then he falls ill: a jog in the plot. No trial, after all. He's had a small stroke, they think, or maybe it's a brain tumor. He is continually sleepy, his speech is slowed, he experiences headaches and gaps in his thinking. It's the stress, says the blond (blaming us, really). The doctors test and retest, probing his honesty along with his illness. He can feel a pin-prick in his leg, one doctor says, which proves he isn't faking; for surely if he wanted to seem sick he would have said he *couldn't* feel it. It occurs to us that this pin-prick test appears to be unfailable; if he can't feel it, he's sick, and if he can, it shows he's not pretending. The unworthiness of this thought makes us feel terrible, eventually, when the doctors end up agreeing that he's truly ill. We hear he's in no condition to make any decisions whatsoever. We wonder what's going on, exactly.

Luckily, it has never seemed that having a functioning governor is all that necessary to our lives.

The blond is in her element. She tells a reporter that she is the Governor's eyes, his ears, and his legs; that she must do everything for him; that as long as he has her, he's fine. There are rumors that he has considered stepping down, but that the blond won't allow it. The boys in the clubhouse complain to anyone who listens that for a while there, she won't even let them in to see him. She just carries the bills he's signed back out to them. You can almost hear their teeth gnashing.

Then, inch by inch, the Governor returns. He is seen for brief periods, still chewing his pipe but looking a bit dimmer, with extra pleats of skin below his eyes. He walks in the garden. He takes a trip to Ocean City. He goes sailing on his yacht.

The blond reminds us that the Governor tires very easily, and that a trial would be injurious to his health. But no one seems to want to listen to her—not even the Governor, who still complains of headaches but seems resigned now, almost grim. He signs his duties over to the Lieutenant Governor, at least for the duration of the trial. The Lieutenant Governor seizes the reins enthusiastically and issues an immediate announcement that he is not in favor of political corruption.

From the indrawn breaths, you would think he's

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slapped the Governor's face.

Now the Governor starts on Trial Number Two, stumbling as he trudges up the Courthouse steps. "Oh, my God, he's falling!" the blond cries. There are tears in the Governor's eyes. We read all this in the paper, but not with the feelings you'd expect. Mainly, we're tired of it. We'd almost like to see the Governor back wheeling and dealing with his racetracks, happy as a little boy. And we tend, for some reason, to blame his tears not on his bruised knee, or on the trial that's awaiting him inside, but on the fact that just before he stumbled, the blond said, watching him narrowly, "I just hope they don't hurt him."

This second trial is a little hard to find jurors for. The judge keeps running into a problem: everyone's already decided on a verdict. And the proceedings themselves have the sketchy tone of a joke being told all over again, from the top, because somebody new walked in just before the punch line. In fact, a few of the witnesses merely have their statements from the last trial read into the records of this one. You picture the jurors mentally tapping their fingers, wondering how their gardens are doing without them. Bootsie will testify; Bootsie won't testify. Irving (Tubby) Schwartz, Father Guido Carcich . . . isn't this where we came in? The weather in Baltimore is hot and dark and still, and this trial seems motionless, timeless, a permanent fact of our lives. Who knows, maybe even the Governor himself is thinking of something else entirely, floating behind his bland, courteous face, dreaming of goose-hunts or of sailing on the Bay—in a good strong wind, on a cool afternoon, just he and a few of the boys.

A corner of a foreign continent that is forever England.

The White Tribe of Zimbabwe

by Xan Smiley

Salisbury, Rhodesia

"They're fighting to protect us from being raped by the kaffirs." This is how a class of 17 and 18-year-old white girls at a not very smart white high school view the role of their 'troopie' boyfriends who are hunting the now ubiquitous 'ters' (short for terrorists), as the nationalist insurgents are known. Most white Rhodesians sincerely believe they are fighting for a just cause. The regular security forces are mostly black, which makes it arguable that the war, far from being racial, actually is directed against—no prize for guessing right—communism. And there is no doubt that some of the insurgents are avowedly Marxist. The rhetoric of most of the military and political leaders is impeccably so.

But the gut feeling that drives the troopies into battle is less strictly ideological than it is a general desire to "keep Rhodesia the way it is." Despite Ian Smith's sudden espousal of the "majority rule," he still hasn't spat out the admission that "majority rule" does actually mean black rule. The very word "Zimbabwe" sticks in the average white's gullet: "makes me feel a bit sick," a comparatively liberal schoolteacher confessed. Many whites still are simply unable to envisage the day of transition.

In Angola and Mozambique, a combined population of over 600,000 whites evaporated in dire distress. In Mozambique, just across Rhodesia's eastern border, perhaps two percent of the 200,000 Portuguese who lived there three years ago remain—some of them in "re-education camps." Yet an extraordinary, almost mocking aura of calm hovers over the Rhodesian capital, Salisbury. The suburbs, where most whites live, are unbelievably but undeniably pleasant, their genteel doziness barely disturbed by the soft plunk of the tennis ball, the clip-clip of the dungareed black gardener tending the hedgerow or the hum of the black nanny taking 'little boss'—the white child—for a walk. Urban police still dawdle unarmed. In Salisbury's black township tucked away four discreet miles from the city center, there hasn't been a whiff of unrest. Yet insurgents now operate less than 20 minutes' drive outside, in Tribal Trust Lands, where fear is the order of the day. Many white farmers live in fortified homesteads equipped with high-powered spotlights, direct radio links with the police and 10-foot-high barbed-wire security fences.

Xan Smiley reports from Rhodesia for *The Spectator* and other British publications.

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The insurgents usually avoid confrontation with Rhodesia's efficient army. They concentrate instead on dominating the rural black populace, by persuasion or—if that fails—by force. Occasionally white farms, particularly those with poor labor relations, are attacked. The farmers are courageous. Generally they are far less willing to pull out than the townsfolk, though one coffee-planter confessed: "If Dr. Kissinger was waiting for us at Beitbridge [the border post with South Africa that overlooks the Limpopo River] with a fat checkbook doling out compensation, we'd all be there in a flash."

In white eyes, the farmer is "the true Rhodesian"—the leather-skinned rancher with baggy shorts and widebrimmed bushwacker's hat, rooted for four generations in Rhodesian soil. Alas for white mythology, there are only 6100 landowning farmers in Rhodesia. Perhaps six times that number actually live, in some way, off the land. In fact, over 80 percent of the whites live in the antiseptic security of Rhodesia's towns. The urban centers of Salisbury and Bulawayo account for over two thirds of the white population.

Even more awkward for the white self image is the brevity with which most Rhodesians have been tied to their "homeland." The term "settler" antagonizes, because it implies recent arrival. There are indeed fifth-generation white Rhodesians. But they are a rarity. The total white population in 1901 was 11,000; in 1922, in a high turnout, 8300 electors voted for Rhodesia's independence (under the British crown, that time) with 5900 demanding union with South Africa. By 1939 there were 64,000 whites. By 1965, the number had swollen to 210,000. Last year, before the present exodus had got under way, the figure leaped to 278,000. Thus the Rhodesian roots of most whites go no deeper than World War II.

Whatever their origin, most white Rhodesians in their new land staunchly sustain a picturesquely British ethos that is evocative of the English home counties in the early 1950s. Street names have been filched unapologetically from Chelsea and Westminster. Schoolchildren wear straw boaters and are inculcated with the values of 'good clean sport' (at which they do indeed excel). Women are apparently content to play quaintly subordinate roles to their manly mates (although the divorce rate, the product of excessive leisure, is one of the highest in the world). Strict censorship primly bleeps out the mildest expletives on TV. A correspondent suggested recently in the *Rhodesian Herald* that Rhodesia—"that last undiseased branch of the old English oak"—would be a fitting place of retirement for Winston Churchill's widow, now apparently impoverished by British tax. After tax, most immigrants from Britain find themselves at least twice as well off as before. Servants are dirt cheap, many gardeners getting $400 a year, plus food and shelter.

There is a burgeoning black middle class, a handful of black bus-owning or liquor-selling millionaires, a mainly black multi-racial university and perhaps the best health service for blacks in the African continent. But the fundamental truth is that white Rhodesia has become increasingly racist since Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front assumed power in 1962. This has been reflected both in attitudes and in legislation. The ethos of the hardfaced artisan won complete ascendance over the more 'gentlemanly' paternalism of earlier governments, whose leaders were disgraced. Thousands of British artisans were swept in with the post-World War II immigrant influx, and they form the core of the Rhodesian Front. Indeed the party's 'principles' are expressly designed for them. I had always thought the slogan that fired white South African mineworkers in their violent 1922 strike was charmingly contradictory:

Workers of the world unite
For a white South Africa.

But clause 15 of the Rhodesian Front's principles goes one better: "The party will protect the standards of skilled [*i.e.* white] workers against exploitation [*sic*] by cheap [*i.e.* black] labor."

There is a thick underlay of snobbery in the venom with which white liberals, most of them professionals or upper-class, dismiss the RF. They quote the old adage, "After the war the officers went to Kenya, the other ranks to Rhodesia." "They're just a lot of horrid, common little men" exploded a liberal lady of gentle English birth. Many liberals still hanker after white-black political "partnership," which most blacks rejected 10 years ago.

In contrast, Ian Smith's RF has been aggressively and unequivocally white supremacist. The RF Rhodesian constitution of 1969 heralded a system that looked like South Africa's. The party vowed to "encourage to the utmost white immigration." Another party principle ran: "we oppose compulsory integration . . . communities should have the right and opportunity to preserve their own identities. The party recognises the obligation of government to ensure the provision of such separate facilities as will make this possible." New legislation gave whites and blacks—despite their numbers—about half the land each, the white areas being generally superior. Health and education were segregated. The Front enacted laws regulating the social sphere, such as one that forbids Africans to drink at most bars in white areas after 7 pm. Urban residential land was segregated. A mixed white-black couple cannot cohabit except in a specially zoned suburb. Above all, the electoral system was altered so that voters could only select among candidates of their own color. There are 50 white seats in parliament, eight additional seats elected by a few thousand 'qualified' blacks and another eight by tribal colleges. A consistent 80 percent of the white electorate has voted for Smith. The liberal white opposition holds not a single seat. Not surprisingly, politically minded blacks have reckoned

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that only violence could topple the regime.

Officially blacks and whites stand "shoulder to shoulder" against the common peril, whose color is red. In fact, anticommunist platitudes inspire neither the white soldier nor the black villager. As in any war, the most effective stimulus to fight is the dehumanization of the enemy. Where combatants differ in race, racist stereotypes are mercilessly exploited. The black nationalist is of course portrayed as a bloodthirsty ape.

The insurgents are indeed utterly ruthless. They have killed most of the 1500 black civilians who have died since 1972—some because they were informers, some for being connected (however remotely) with government, some for being lukewarm in their nationalism. Other blacks simply have fallen victim to old personal or clan feuds. Nearly 200 blacks have been killed by landmines planted by the guerrillas. The Rhodesian army has striven to keep velvet gloves on, though arbitrary beatings to punish recalcitrant villagers or extort information are becoming commoner. But what utterly destroys the government's hearts-and-minds campaign is the guerrillas' deliberate merging into the generally sympathetic black population—which then inevitably becomes the butt of army frustration. A few months ago, 36 black civilians died in crossfire in one incident. Many civilians breaking curfew with no anti-government intention have been gunned down.

Where young white soldiers are confronted with a blank wall of hostile village passivity, nothing highlights more starkly white Rhodesians' extraordinary ignorance of African society than their almost universal failure to know any of the African languages. Some whites speak *chilapalapa*—more commonly and crudely known as 'kitchen kaffir'—which is enough to give servants their basic orders. Perhaps two percent of whites can actually converse with the rural African who speaks little or no English. All the white troopie sees is the gory result of guerrilla violence, whose motive he cannot comprehend and which he readily attributes to innate savagery. Nor can the colonial administrators, benign men in the main, understand the villagers' lack of gratitude for 30 years or so of dedicated work. Under guerrilla orders, villagers destroy government-built dip tanks (where cattle are sprayed against disease), burn government beerhalls, prevent children from attending school. The administrators can only reckon that such self-damaging behavior betrays deep-rooted African irrationality.

It is this society, hardened and sometimes embittered by the war, that put Smith in power. Numbed by confusion and suspense as their leaders apparently prepare for black rule, many whites still hope that 'Smithy' has one last trick up his sleeve. The longer the war continues, the less chance there is of compromise. But it is just possible that he may succeed in nudging his constituency grudgingly toward a goal they do not wish to reach. "There is still an enormous fund of goodwill between the races" runs a popular white optimists' maxim. Alas, I have yet to hear a black man quote it.

Relax. Over 10,000 years it doesn't change very much.

Has the Weather Gone Mad?

by B.J. Mason

Weather and climate affect so many aspects of our daily lives—our health, food and water supplies, transportation, comfort and leisure—that any marked change, whether natural or man-made, is bound to cause concern. Droughts, floods and tempests, for centuries regarded as expressions of divine wrath, now are seen as natural and inevitable (though not always predictable) fluctuations of a turbulent atmosphere that breaks a meteorological record almost every day somewhere in the world. But climate fluctuations are likely to have a greater economic and social impact in the future than in the past. Increasing world population and a desire to raise living standards have increased the pressure on natural resources of food, water and energy. The balance between supply and demand for these essentials can now be seriously affected by only rather marginal changes in climate. World grain reserves are only a small fraction of annual consump-

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tion; recent crop failures in China, the Soviet Union and the United States, due to only temporary spells of bad weather, indicate the difficulties that could arise if there were a widespread and persistent deterioration in the climate of the major food-producing areas.

It is natural to inquire whether recent major weather fluctuations were so abnormal as to suggest a special cause or whether the records show similar events in the past. Remarkable progress has been made in tracing the major climatic changes over the last one million years, but the record becomes spotty as it goes back beyond about 10,000 years. Instrumental records go back for only about 250 years. One of the most reliable is the temperature record for central England dating back to 1668. Its most prominent feature, true of records for the whole Northern Hemisphere, is the upward trend of temperature beginning about 1880 and continuing until 1940. This trend was reversed between 1940 and 1970, with mean temperatures drifting about halfway back to the 1880 levels. On the assumption that this downward trend would continue, some scientists have unwisely predicted the early onset of a new ice age. It is not justifiable to make this kind of forecast by extrapolation of such a brief trend from a highly fluctuating record, especially when we do not understand the causes of such changes. Indeed there is evidence that the cooling trend has been arrested. Since 1970 the lower atmosphere in the Arctic region has warmed by about one fifth of a degree Celsius, with a marked reduction in the amount of ice and snow. Stronger westerly winds, with less frequent outbreaks of northerlies, have led to a succession of five mild winters in Europe.

Historical records have little predictive value, but they may be used to judge whether a particular event is 'abnormal' in the sense that it goes beyond predictable fluctuations based on the long-term record. Recent disasters such as the drought in the Sahel region of Africa are far from being unprecedented. Wet and dry spells tend to occur in groups of years, but they do not occur at regular predictable intervals. The droughts from 1970 to 1974 (the rainfall has since recovered) have been attributed by some scientists to a southward shift of the major climatic zones, including the Sahara desert; but in fact, during this five-year period the subtropical high-pressure belt actually moved slightly northwards.

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The recent severe summer drought in England also came at the end of a five-year dry spell in which the average annual rainfall over England and Wales was only 826 mm—the lowest since 1850. But, since 1825 there have been six five-year periods with average rain of less than 840 mm, suggesting that we can expect a five-year dry period to occur about once in 25 years. In the 16-month period between May 1975 and August 1976 the rainfall totalled only 760 mm, the lowest value since 1727 when records began. Such an unusual event can be expected to occur only once in 500 years.

These anomalies had dramatic consequences for the British Isles, but they were quite small when viewed on a global scale. They probably were the result of rather minor fluctuations in the large-scale atmospheric circulation, which caused compensating changes elsewhere. The European and the Sahel droughts, both of which have since been followed by heavy rains, do not suggest major and permanent changes in the global pattern of climate. They are expressions of its variability. Unfortunately there is no physical basis for predicting either the timing or magnitude of such fluctuations, because we do not yet understand the underlying causes.

The main barrier to complete description, understanding and prediction of weather and climate is the immense complexity of our atmosphere, in which many processes interact on all scales ranging from millimeters to thousands of kilometers. The result is a complex system controlled by many competing factors operating within constraints imposed by the dimensions, geography and rate of rotation of the Earth, the sun's radiation and the properties of the atmospheric gases. The interaction of so many processes, acting on different space and time scales, makes it almost impossible to distinguish cause from effect and unsafe to infer direct causal relationships even between apparently closely connected events.

The most promising approach to understanding and predicting weather and climate is the development of complex computer models designed to simulate the atmosphere as a turbulent rotating fluid heated by the sun and exchanging heat and moisture with the Earth's surface and the oceans. Since even the most powerful computers—capable of executing more than 10 million arithmetical operations per second—are inadequate for the task, even the most sophisticated models are much simplified representations of the real atmosphere. Although they are not yet capable of predicting future climatic changes, these computer models can give some indication of the likely effects of fairly large changes in such factors as the sun's radiation, the carbon-dioxide and dust content of the atmosphere, vegetation, ice and snow cover, sea-surface temperature and the artificial release of large quantities of heat and moisture.

Simple calculations indicate that a one percent increase in the sun's radiation would produce an

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average rise of about 0.7 degrees Celsius in the temperature on earth. The sun's output does not appear to change by as much as one percent; this probably accounts for the failure to find strong correlations between the weather and the sunspot cycle. But in the longer term, the intensity of solar radiation on the top of the atmosphere varies due to changes in the Earth's orbit in cycles of about 96,000, 40,000 and 20,000 years. These fluctuations are much larger than any observed variations in the solar output. Ten thousand years ago, the incoming solar radiation was about one percent greater at 65 degrees latitude than at present and 25,000 years ago it was two percent less than at present. The seasonal effects are even greater. For example, 10,000 years ago the radiation received in the summer half year was four percent greater at all latitudes than at present while 25,000 years ago it was about two percent less. These variations of the incoming solar radiation coincided with the major advances and recessions of the ice sheets in the northern hemisphere over the last half million years, and the calculated variations of radiative heating are sufficient to account for the formation and melting of the ice and the temperature changes of several degrees Celsius in polar and temperature latitudes.

Changes in the temperature of the sea surface undoubtedly affect the atmospheric circulation. During the winter of 1962-63, the coldest in Britain for 250 years, a large area of the eastern tropical Atlantic Ocean was up to 2.5 degrees warmer than normal. When this anomaly was inserted into the computer model it produced an area of low surface pressure centered in the Bay of Biscay and a large area of high pressure centered just east of Greenland. The modified circulation resulted in strong easterly winds over the British Isles very similar to those that caused the cold winter of 1962-63.

The concentration of carbon-dioxide in the atmosphere has increased by 10 percent during this century due to the burning of fossil fuels. Model calculations indicate that this should have warmed the lower atmosphere by an average of 0.3 degrees. The fact that, even so, temperatures in the northern hemisphere actually *fell* by about 0.6 degrees between 1940 and 1970 has been attributed to a simultaneous increase in the dust in the atmosphere.

The amount of dust in the atmosphere increased markedly after 1963, almost certainly because of a large volcanic explosion in Bali. Now, with measurements almost back to pre-1963 levels, there is little evidence that the dust content is increasing significantly. Following the Bali eruption temperatures in the lower stratosphere rose by several degrees but there was no detectable effect at ground level. Similar results were obtained from a computer model when a stratospheric layer of dust, sufficient to intercept four percent of the incoming solar radiation, was inserted. This produced local heating of up to 10 degrees due to absorption of the radiation by the dust, but there were no discernible effects at ground level.

The same model was used to investigate the likely effects of reducing the concentration of the stratospheric ozone layer by 50 percent. This produced a cooling of up to 20 degrees Celsius at 40 kilometers altitude over the tropics, but again there were no significant changes in the lower atmosphere. Since we calculate that several hundred Concordes each flying five hours per day would not reduce the ozone by more than half of one percent (US scientists have estimated about 1 percent), and such a small reduction could not be distinguished from the much larger natural fluctuations, supersonic transport aircraft are unlikely to have a significant effect on the climate during this century.

US scientists have suggested that chlorofluorocarbon compounds, commonly known as freons, when released into the atmosphere from aerosol cans and refrigerators, will be carried up into the stratosphere and there be decomposed by ultra-violet radiation to produce free chlorine atoms that will combine with and destroy the ozone molecules. Calculations based on very simplified models of the air motion suggest that if freons are produced at the current rate, they will reduce the ozone by about eight percent by the year 2100. But because the ozone cycle involves many chemical species and reactions whose concentrations and rates are uncertain, the results of these calculations may well be in error by factors of three to five. Much more research is required to establish the potential threat of freons compared to that of other methods of ozone depletion. Whatever may be the harmful medical effects of an increase in ultraviolet radiation, we can be fairly confident that the *effects on the climate* will be negligible and undetectable.

If consumption of energy, especially of fossil fuels, were to continue to rise at the current rate to reach a five-fold increase by about 2000 AD, the additional heat, carbon-dioxide and particulate matter released into the atmosphere might well produce significant climatic changes, such as temperature rises of about one degree Celsius around the world during the next 50 to 100 years. These changes, which would not necessarily be harmful, might be amplified through partial melting of the polar ice. But because the atmosphere operates many simultaneous mechanisms, the overall effect cannot yet be predicted and, in any case, may well be masked by natural variations.

The atmosphere is a robust system with a built-in capacity to counteract any perturbation. This is why the global climate, despite frequent fluctuations, is fairly stable over periods of 10,000 years or so. Sensational warnings of imminent catastrophe, unsupported by firm facts or figures, not only are irresponsible but are likely to prove counterproductive. The atmosphere is wont to make fools of those who do not show proper respect for its complexity and resilience.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

Midsummer Roundup

The Best Way (Specialty). In a wasteland, one green shoot is a harvest. The way that films have been running lately—hobbling, rather—this modest French picture stands out for its delicacy of method and intent.

Claude Miller, the director and co-author, was production chief on eight Truffaut films, so it's not exactly startling that his own first feature has many Truffaut touches. The setting is a summer camp for children (in 1960) with the feeling of the end of *Small Change;* the editing—especially in the big love scene—is elliptical and evocative; there is even an iris shot. But Miller has some genuine character sense of his own, some ability to create moods with implications.

It's a little drama of sexual tussle between two male counselors: the hearty, self-assured sports counselor and the sensitive dramatics counselor who is also the son of the owner. The sensitive one has a girl friend who visits from Paris and who unwittingly heightens the tension. The point of the story is to discover who is really the stronger of the two men and who really has the homosexual tendencies.

You know the answer from the previous paragraph. But it's all gently directed, and it's decently acted by Patrick Dewaere as the hearty (he was the one in *Going Places* who was not Gerard Depardieu), Patrick Bouchitey, and the gray-eyed Christine Pascal who is much more attractive than you think she's going to be. The action in the climactic scene is a bit contrived and the epilogue is a bit unclarifying, but it's a relief these days to watch a film explore some complications of human behavior by relatively subtle means.

The Spy Who Loved Me (United Artists). The new James Bond. Well, not *new*, exactly. Let's just say: Another.

But that's fine. If they're going to serve us old baloney, I much prefer this brand to *Star Wars.* The pseudo inventions are much more ingenious, the actors are mostly competent, the dialogue—though sometimes laboriously salacious—is not corn flakes, there is no high-school mysticism—just the usual battle to save this planet from a fiendish mastermind. And, best of all, there is no self-conscious innocence, no (essentially dirty-minded) prepubescent purity. The many gorgeous girls, barely clad, are much more a kidding of male chauvinism than a truckle to it, and at least their use precludes the *Star Wars* stench of "We were better before we had sex thoughts."

The best thing about Roger Moore, the 007, is that he knows he's too goodlooking to be taken seriously. The best thing about Barbara Bach is that she knows she's no more like the top Soviet secret agent than the next photographer's model. I don't believe in summer fare in films (or plays or books), but if there were such a thing, *Spy* would be it. What more restful August relaxation than to watch Bond, fleeing pursuers on skis, whip around and ski backwards to shoot a pursuer with a rifle concealed in a ski-pole?

The Last Remake of Beau Geste (Universal). Drawing-board comedy. You can see that it's been carefully planned by experienced gagsters, that it's kept moving with a certain computerized planning, but you just don't laugh much. It all seems like a blueprint, not really realized.

Example: a very tough sergeant in the Foreign Legion has a metal left leg. When he swings himself up on his horse, we see that the horse too has a metal left (fore) leg. Now that's not an unfunny gag. Possibly it made you snort when you read it. But when I saw it, nothing.

Part of the trouble may be that *Beau Geste,* though filmed three times ('26, '39, '66), is too remote a subject for effective parody. Partly it may be because that good actor Michael York, who carries a lot of the load, is just too straight to keep the film in pratfall-land. Partly it may be because the other lead is Marty Feldman (also director and co-author). I'm told that Feldman is a comic's comic. Maybe only comics should go to see him. On the other hand, maybe this pop-eyed and cross-eyed English buffoon, who was in *Young Frankenstein* and *Silent Movie,* is helping to satisfy the current appetite for grotesquery of which Shelly Duvall's success is another symptom.

Trevor Howard harumphs around OK as old Lord Geste. Peter Ustinov does one of his OK German acts as the tough sergeant. Roy Kinnear, one of Britain's best comics, is his aide; Spike Milligan, one of Britain's worst, is a family retainer; Ann-Margaret is not bad at all as a willowy wanton; but a good time is had by few.

Note: James Earl Jones plays an Oxford-accented sheikh in the above, which reminds me: Readers may remember that I said David Prowse, the masked heavy in *Star Wars,* sounded like a vocal double for Jones. A Maryland reader kindly sent me a clipping that says Jones dubbed the part.

MacArthur (Universal). Gregory Peck, not an actor who sets me a-tingle, gives his best performance here since *The Gunfighter* (1950). Ungratefully, I have to add that it's not good enough. Peck gets some of the man's grandeur, intelligence, sentiment, shrewdness, and poise. What he does not give it is what he does not have, histrionic richness in voice and gesture. Only a 19th-century theater star—*not* a ham—could play MacArthur because a 19th-century star is exactly what MacArthur was. Some day, if they like, the French will find an actor to play DeGaulle because there are many French actors who understand rhetoric and the line of the *beau geste.* If there is such an American actor around, he certainly is not Peck.

In one respect this story is like *Richard III* and *Cyrano de Bergerac*: there's no point in doing it if you don't have the perfect actor for the lead. Whatever the shortcomings of *Patton,* George C. Scott's performance justified the film's existence. Here we're left with potted biography, an expanded version of a serious-type TV special. (In fact, MacArthur was a TV subject not long ago, with Henry Fonda as the general—a much better actor than Peck but even less suited to the part. The script writers, Hal Barwood and Matthew Robbins, begin with the 72-year-old man speaking at West Point, then go back to Bataan, then go forward until the film ends at the Point again. They balance and weigh as they go: a pinch of

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ego, a pinch of valor, etc. It's the new "frank" style, particularly prevalent on TV, which shows you just enough of the less flattering side to make you think you're getting an unvarnished picture, the whole truth.

I can remember being glad, when MacArthur returned from Korea in 1951, that he was as old as he was and that he had to take off his military cap when he did. The smell of the proconsul was in the air. But he was just too old to head a movement. And when he took off his visored cap (which he had rarely done for photographers)—the cap that shaded his eyes and emphasized his aquiline nose—he was just a balding elderly gentleman. The charisma, which had brought tens of thousands shouting into the streets when he returned, was gone.

It was an important event—non-event, really—in American politics. It's not really grasped by the scriptwriters, nor by Peck, earnest as he is. Since he can't fulf ıe Caesarian general, we don't get the contrast with the retired old officer in civvies.

Sorcerer (Paramount-Universal). Another casting problem. Many have wondered why William Friedkin's remake of H. G. Clouzot's *Wages of Fear* (1953) is sluggish though it's snappily edited and directed. One strong reason: Clouzot's leading man, Yves Montand, had great personal appeal and considerable power. Friedkin's leading man, Roy Scheider, is like a plastic doll of a comic-book hero.

Besides, the second time round, the plot seems thin. A US oil company in Central America offers four fugitives from justice good money and passports to drive trucks with volatile dynamite over bad mountain roads to help fight an oil well fire. All the suspense (not much) is in those bad roads. But if the oil company needed the dynamite so desperately why didn't they send other trucks ahead to repair flimsy bridges and clear away fallen trees?

SUMMER MYSTERY ISSUE

The Issue Is Murder

Murder Like Crazy

Harry Stephen Keeler

When they made Harry Stephen Keeler the mold self-destructed. For close to half a century he stomped through the staid precincts of the mystery story like King Kong crossing a country churchyard. His more than 70 novels form a self-contained world of monstrously complicated intrigues, half farce and half Grand Guignol, half radical social criticism and half a labyrinth in which he hid himself. Keeler invented the "webwork novel," in which literally hundreds of bizarre events explode like cigars in the white-knight hero's face but turn out in the end to be mathematically interrelated, with every absurd incident making blissfully perfect sense within HSK's zany frame of reference. The raw material for his novels reposed in a huge filing cabinet

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filled with thousands of old newspaper clippings. When he was ready to tackle a new book he would select a random handful of clippings and, no matter how disconnected they might be, interweave their subject matter into his plot. His favorite devices for tieing story elements together were the loony law, the nutty religious tenet, the wacky will, the crackpot contract, and—commonest of all—the interlocking network of backbreaking coincidences. He loved to have his characters talk in outrageous ethnic dialects and to throw them into quasi-science fictional situations. He loved to attack the social evils he saw: racism, brutal cops, the military, corrupt pols, capital punishment, the maltreatment of the mentally ill, all the dark underside of an America where "Money was Emperor, and Might was Right." And most of all he loved cats, even dedicating some of his novels to favorite felines.

Born in Chicago on November 3, 1890, Harry grew up among Victorian thespians in the theatrical boarding-

house his mother was forced to run after her first husband died in Harry's infancy and her second gambled away the family funds and killed himself. He once said that on the day his school taught grammar and rhetoric he played hooky and caught perch at the foot of Superior Street. He obtained an electrical engineering degree in 1912 from Armour (later Illinois) Institute of Technology and spent the next two years working as an electrician in a South Chicago steel mill and writing short stories on the side. Typical of these early tales is "Victim No. 5," which he sold to *Young's Magazine* in 1914 for a lordly 10 dollars. Ivan Kossakoff, professional strangler of women, ends his days locked in a vaudeville performer's theatrical trunk and squeezed to death by the pet boa constrictor who lives inside. Between 1914 and 1924 Keeler sold dozens of novelettes and magazine serials with titles like "The Trepanned Skull," "The Stolen Finger" and "The Giant Moth," and perfected his webwork technique in the process. In 1919 he married short-story writer Hazel Goodwin and took a part-time job as editor of *10-Story Book* magazine, a position he held until 1940.

His first novel, *The Voice of the Seven Sparrows* (1924), is a wild comic intrigue about rival Chicago newsmen searching for a publisher's vanished daughter and encountering along the way characters like Ng Chuen Li Yat, the Chinese millionaire who bet a fortune that he could walk across South America in a year and a half, and Peter Zeller, the shipwreck survivor who mailed out 14,257 identical deuce-of-spades cards in order to trap one man. In *The Spectacles of Mr. Cagliostro* (1926) Jerry Middleton, heir to a Chicago patent-medicine fortune, is replaced by an imposter and railroaded into the state mental hospital, where he is befriended by the genuine madpersons, hilariously analyzed by a visiting shrink named Herr Doctor Meister-Professor von Zero, and nearly killed by an assassin who's been hired to get himself admitted to the asylum and slice up our hero. In *Sing Sing Nights* (1927) three authors are about to be electrocuted for murder when the governor offers one man a blank pardon, and the writers agree that each will tell an impromptu story to the uneducated death-house guard, the pardon to go to the teller of the tale the guard likes best. The three stories (actually unrelated magazine novelettes Keeler had written before) are intercut with mind-blowing discussions of the nature of storytelling. Thanks to a flabbergasting Keeler Coincidence all three penmen are set free in the last chapter. *Thieves' Nights* (1929) concerns penniless Chicago drifter Ward Sharlow, who is hired to impersonate a look-alike missing heir and runs into a melange of oddball dilemmas trying to keep up the deception. One problem is a disfigured butler, the author of a long novelette about characters telling each other stories about characters telling each other stories. (What a way to recycle Keeler's old magazine tales!) Late in the novel the kindly-thief protagonist of the innermost layer of stories turns out to be "real" and pops into the outer circle of the book just in time to extricate Sharlow from a fine mess.

These are typical early Keeler novels—generally set in Chicago, creatively varying the Arabian Nights framework, full of grotesque characters and events, packed with coincidence and bitter social comment and Victorian dialogue so as almost to suggest an American Dickens. Many Keelerganzas of these years are of truly elephantine proportions, such as *The Amazing Web* (1930) with its 532 pages; the 741-page *The Matilda Hunter Murder* (1931), starring Tuddleton T. Trotter, aged, bedraggled universal genius and patron of homeless cats; and *The Box from Japan* (1932) which is the heavyweight champ of all time with 765 closely printed pages. Others, like *The Washington Square Enigma* and *The Face of the Man from Saturn* (both 1933), are extremely short and tight and move at jumbojet speed. Embedded within *The Face* is Keeler's best-known short story, "John Jones' Dollar" (1914), which describes, in the form of a history professor's lecture in 3255 AD, how one bright morning back in AD 2961 the investment by John Jones of a single dollar bill more than a millennium earlier suddenly brought the entire solar system to "the true socialistic and democratic condition for which man had futilely hoped throughout the ages."

By the mid-1930s Keeler's books had

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become longer, wilder, wackier and less constrained by conventional discipline than ever. The first of his two-volume meganovels, published as *The Marceau Case* and *X. Jones of Scotland Yard* (both 1936) consists of hundreds of documents—letters, telegrams, newspaper columns, photos (one of a bare-breasted lady and another of Keeler himself), cartoons, ads, courtroom transcripts and booklets of Chinese dialect jokes—all combining to tell the story of the Aeronautic Strangler-Baby case. Who garroted midget-hating tycoon André Marceau in the center of his croquet lawn without leaving a single mark in the freshly rolled earth or any other clue except the victim's dying words: "The Babe from Hell!"? Keeler comes up with a gaggle of outlandish alternate solutions, some of them indeed spilling over into a later novel, *The Wonderful Scheme of Mr. Christopher Thorne* (1937), where they crop up in between the disquisitions on Oriental philosophy and savage indictments of America delivered by half-black half-Indian Ebenezer Sitting-Down-Bear.

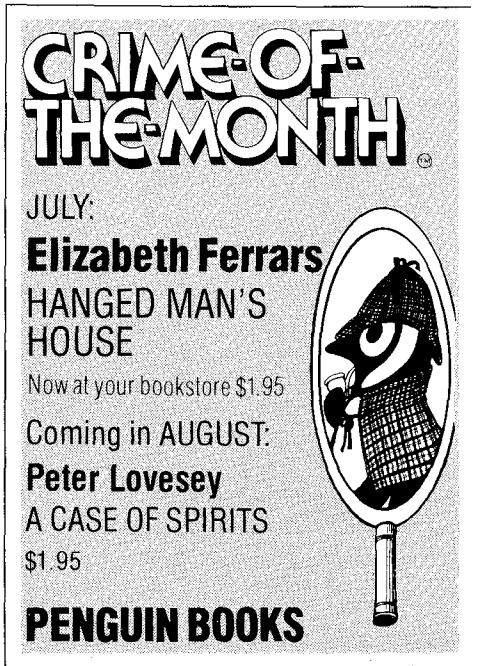
Keeler's anticipation of *Catch-22* was published in two volumes as *The Defrauded Yeggman* and *10 Hours* (both 1937) and, in Arabian Nights fashion, consists largely of the tales told by three hobos at their court-martial. The trio had happened to alight in a Texas border town where martial law has been declared because a demented Mexican general, equipped with an air force and strong views on reincarnation, has threatened to bomb the town after the local authorities sold his dead brother's skull. The tramps' trial is a model of procedural outrage, with a sadistic prosecutor, inept defense counsel, a secret agreement among the officer judges to finish the case in a couple of hours, and a war order (printed, with fine care for due process, in both English and Spanish) forbidding any civilian court to interfere. Truly HSK was no fan of the military.

The most personal of Keeler's meganovels, *The Mysterious Mr. I* (1938) and *The Chameleon* (1939), deal with the nameless narrator's attempts to collect $100,000 by returning an escaped millionaire to the lunatic asylum before midnight. On his quest he trips blithely through close to a hundred separate identities, posing in turn as a tycoon, a safecracker, a locomotive engineer, a gambler, several different detectives, several writers, a couple of actors, a philosophy professor and God knows what else, until we finally realize that the seeker is hunting no one but himself. After 500 pages of lies within lies our fictional forerunner of The Great Imposter seduces a nun, arranges to make her a rich woman, and returns freely to the asylum where he will spend his days reading British magazines and sipping Chateau d'Yquem with his keeper. In *I* Keeler painted his self-portrait: metaphysician and storyteller and gleeful madman, so torn by the real world's rot and horror that he creates alternate universes of his own with the ease and delight of a child blowing bubbles.

During the '40s and '50s Keeler abandoned meganovels and alternated between single titles, of standard length and brain-boggling contents, and several series of novels dealing respectively with the adventures of a book, a circus, a house, an industrial plant, and a skull. Most of these are set not in Chicago but in unnamed corners of middle America, and many include Hazel Goodwin Keeler's whiskered old magazine stories, which Harry spliced into the text just as he had used to throw his own short stories into his novels and attribute them to writer characters. In the first of the "book" series, *The Peacock Fan* (1941), author and Sinophile Gordon Highsmith, about to be hanged for his wife's murder, frantically tries to prove his innocence from his death-house cell, with the help of an old friend and spiritual adviser from a religious brotherhood originally known as The Order of the Holy Nail. (Toilet-bowl tycoon Gregory Phemaster endowed the order with a fortune on condition that it change its name to the Gregory Phemaster Order of the Holy Nail and appoint his nephew the abbot.) As in the other entries in the series, a rare volume of Chinese aphorisms entitled *The Way Out* provides the protagonist with just that at the crucial moment. In the circus novels, beginning with *The Vanishing Gold Truck* (1941), we follow that benevolent loon Angus MacWhorter, proprietor of MacWhorter's Mammoth Motorized Shows, and his wild escapades while guiding the troupe through the rocky absurdities of a road from nowhere to nowhere called Old Twistibus. Typical of Keeler's single titles of these years is *The Case of the Barking Clock* (1947), in which social outcast Joe Czeszcziczki (whom everyone mercifully agrees to call Zicky after a few pages) is about to be executed for the murder of State's Attorney Umphrey Ibstone and appeals for help to that woolly-headed old genius Tuddleton T. Trotter. Although the ancient gentleman takes two-thirds of the book just to contact Zicky in the death house, he proceeds to prove his client's innocence in jig time and earns a comfortable retirement for himself and his beloved cat Sebastian Sixsmith.

Unfortunately, the wilder grew Keeler's flights of fancy, the fewer readers flew with him. After *The Case of the Transposed Legs* (1948) he lost his American publishers, and his British firm gave up on him after the MacWhorter novel *Stand By—London Calling* (1953). Harry didn't stop writing, but from then on his books appeared only in Spanish and Portuguese translations, if at all. Among these late works are gems of insanity like *The Case of the Transparent Nude, The Man Who Changed His Skin, The Affair of the Bottled Deuce* and *The Riddle of the Wooden Parakeet*. But perhaps the maddest of all the unavailable Keelers is *The Six from Nowhere*, in which MacWhorter and the circus folk counter the efforts of Gonwyck Schwaaa and his gang to steal a pulp detective magazine from Angus's safe, with the quest for the magazine intertwined with the affairs of a British woman mathematician, an educated hobo, the ashes of a corrupt politician in a Chicago crypt, and a pair of circus cats who have left 2,000,000 progeny across the United States. Every English-language publisher who rejected this chunk of absolute joy should be made to stand in the corner with a dunce cap.

In 1960 Hazel Keeler died, and Harry became a desolate man. He gave away carloads of his books to Chicago



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secondhand dealers and lived alone, starting many novels but finishing none. His only regular writing during the early '60s was a mimeographed newsletter he turned out for friends, filling the multicolored pages with theosophical and literary and cat lore and paeans to the quintessential wonderfulness of Señor Francisco Franco, whose country was the only place in the world where he was still in print. In 1963 he married Thelma Rinaldo, who had been his secretary briefly in the late 1920s, and with her love and care he was, like Dickens's Dr. Manette, recalled to life. Two final and grotesquely funny long novels, *Strange Journey* and *The Scarlet Mummy*, were completed over the next few years, though sadly never published even in Madrid.

On January 22, 1967, Harry Stephen Keeler died, with his boots on and without despair, leaving a dozen unfinished books, confident that one day he would be read again. Perhaps he was right; certainly he deserves to be. He spun an alternate universe all his own from its metaphysical underpinnings to the speech and costumes of its inhabitants. Committed humanist-radical and exuberant zany, he was the true original of Kesey's R.P. MacMurphy and Vonnegut's Kilgore Trout, the sublime nutty genius of the age, a man so far ahead of his time we have still not caught up to him. "A wonderful man, that old Socialist John Jones the first . . . considering that he lived in such a dark era as the twentieth century."

Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

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Murder in the Dark

Dashiell Hammett

Despite our somewhat sentimental attachment to Sam Spade—or to Humphrey Bogart playing Sam Spade (or, for that matter, to William Powell and Myrna Loy playing rather rarified versions of Nick and Nora Charles)—it is really the Continental Op who is the essential Hammett hero. And while *The Maltese Falcon* may be Hammett's finest novel, it is really the two dozen stories and two novels through which the Op moves that present us with the hard-boiled detective (which figure Hammett largely invented himself) at his sustained best.

In the early 1920s Dashiell (pronounced, according to Lillian Hellman, Duh-shéel) Hammett, a former operative for the Pinkerton Detective Agency, began writing stories which appeared in the pages of *Black Mask*, the famous pulp magazine whose rise to fame occurred simultaneously with, and was at least partly caused by, Hammett's own. He eventually settled on a nameless protagonist who, as an Op for the fictional San Francisco-based Continental Detective Agency, must have borne some resemblance, in both style and experience, to Hammett himself. However, Hammett was careful to distance himself somewhat from his detective through the character's physical appearance: the Op is short, fat, balding, middle-aged, not especially attractive to women, and so, in this respect, quite unlike his successors, Sam Spade, Ned Beaumont, and Nick Charles, as well as Hammett himself. But the Op has strengths, among them the ability to know the extent to which he can rely upon his body in tight situations—he knows he's tough enough to take on some opponents, but not tough enough for others. He's confident of his abilities, which is one of his strengths, but not over-confident, which is another. But the most striking power that the Op possesses is the ability to read character, and it is in his marshalling of this skill that we see him at his best.

Prior to Hammett, the writers of detective fiction had created protagonists—Poe's Dupin, Conan Doyle's Holmes, Freeman's Dr. Thorndyke, Jacques Futrelle's Thinking Machine—who were experts at making deductions based on material clues—footprints, knife scars, cigar ashes, etc. One of Hammett's major innovations in the genre (and one to which surprisingly little emphasis is given in critical discussions of him) is the creation of a detective who relies less on empirical analysis of material clues and more on his ability to read people. Again and again, the Op finds himself in situations in which he must examine the faces of the people he questions, or listen to their voices—not their words, but their voices, with the subtle modulations of tone and half-suppressed monosyllables and other nuances which indicate to the trained sleuth the presence of a level of truth *behind* the words, behind the mask. As a first person narrator, the Op allows us to enter his mind, to hear him think as encounters the people whom he interrogates, seeking to find the key which will enable him to read them. The Op sees all faces as masks, behind which *anything* may lie concealed. And in doing so he brings into the stories in which he appears the central element of ambiguity, the profound sense created in the reader that nothing is certain, nothing can be relied upon, no one's word may be believed absolutely. Descent into the dark recesses of human character, as the Op discovers repeatedly, is descent into the maelstrom.

But there *is* something to cling to in the confusion, and that something is the Op himself. He can rely on himself (and we, vicariously, can rely on him) because he's tough, and his toughness is a resilience which allows him to take the buffets of a murderously treacherous world and still triumph. In his creation of a character who is as hard as the criminals with whom he mixes—who literally speaks their language—Hammett almost singlehandedly revolutionized the literature of crime. The gentlemanly amenities, which serve so many detectives of the British school—the Hercule Poirots, Albert Campions, Lord Peter Wimseys, Sir Henry Merrivales—are recognized by the Op to be perfectly useless in a world where violent action always speaks more effectively than a civil tongue. In the mean streets down which the Op moves, the language that is understood is that of the gun, the knife, and the blackjack; and so the detective who would walk those streets must speak that language. And in making the Op such an effective user of that language—such a convincing tough guy—Hammett shows him to be in possession of the tools of survival, which fact makes a further statement about the nature of the world that Hammett creates as a

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microcosm for our own: it is a world whose very toughness suggests that the best we can hope for in it is survival.

As his passport down those mean streets the Op takes with him the language of the streets, and this is a key ingredient in Hammett's much praised

Drawing by David Schorr

style, namely the colloquial. See, for example, the opening line of "Fly Paper": "It was a wandering daughter job." Or, again, the opener of "The Big Knockover": "I found Paddy the Mex in Jean Larrouy's dive." We may laugh occasionally when we encounter such dated terms as "gat," "yegg," and "frail"; but Hammett is a good enough writer not to exhaust us with endless repetition of these and other such slang terms. Rather, he has the Op use them to remind us of the fact that the detective is of, and not easily separated from, the tough world in which he works.

But there is much more to the celebrated Hammett style than just the use of colloquial or idiomatic English, however innovative the use of such language by the so-called *Black Mask* school of writers was in its day. The style is further characterized by the use of a lean, bare, unornamented prose which in its utility and flexibility is most appropriate to the use to which it is put, namely the describing of the fast-paced action that makes Hammett's stories such good reading. True, Hammett occasionally permitted himself to wander momentarily into the forest of poetic excess for which Raymond Chandler would later become famous (or infamous). For example, the Op says at one point, "Jack and I stood waiting in a fog that was like a damp fur coat"; or, even more Chandleresque is this: "The room was black as an honest politician's prospects." But this is exceptional; such excesses do not occur frequently. Far more characteristic is this passage from "The Gutting of Couffignal":

> *Wedge-shaped Couffignal is not a large island, and not far from the mainland, to which it is linked by a wooden bridge. Its western shore is a high, straight cliff that jumps abruptly up out of San Pablo Bay. From the top of this cliff the island slopes eastward, down to a smooth pebble beach that runs into the water again, where there are piers and a clubhouse and moored pleasure boats.*

There is not a single unnecessary word in the passage; in its lean, tight, economical way it does with words what a camera does with images: it gives us as nearly objective a presentation of the world as is possible in art.

But other effects can be had in this style, too—humor, for example. Add understated wit to a Hemingwayan terseness and you get something like this passage from "Fly Paper":

> *Babe liked Sue. Vassos liked Sue. Sue liked Babe. Vassos didn't like that. Jealousy spoiled the Greek's judgment. He kept the speakeasy door locked one night when Babe wanted to come in. Babe came in, bringing pieces of the door with him. Vassos got his gun out, but couldn't shake Sue off his arm. He stopped trying when Babe hit him with the part of the door that had the brass knob on it. Babe and Sue went away from Vassos' together.*

Finally, the style is perfectly suited to the man. In its leanness, its toughness, and its efficiency, it is the perfect vehicle by means of which the Op expresses himself. And perfect for the stories also; its fluidity fits it appropriately to such fast moving tales as "The Scorched Face," "Dead Yellow Women," "The Big Knockover " and "The Whosis Kid."

Throughout the '20s Hammett brought the Continental Op through encounters with many formidable opponents (most notably, I think, the extraordinary villainess in "The House in Turk Street" who then reappears to fight an extremely tense battle of wits with the Op in "The Girl With the Silver Eyes") in about two dozen short stories, before turning to novel-length works in the late '20s. In *Red Harvest* (1929), he has the Op take on an entire town, Personville (pronounced "Poisonville"), with awesomely bloody results. In his second novel, *The Dain Curse* (1929), the Op goes up against insanity, dope, ghosts, a freak religious cult, plus the usual run of thugs, gunsels, grifters, etc. who seem to be a permanent part of the landscape he frequents. In both of these novels Hammett displays a facility for creating and then holding together extremely intricate and involved plots, a facility which again reminds one of Chandler (think of the baroque twists and turns of *Farewell, My Lovely*, for example) and also reminds us that Hammett was the chief source of so much of Chandler's inspiration.

When Hammett finally abandoned the Op in favor of Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1930), he created a hero who is arguably no more than a slightly more personable—and of course handsomer—version of the Op. Spade, like his predecessor, is a tough loner; like the Op he has a sense of responsibility to the work he does—they both enjoy being detectives, and both define themselves in terms of their ability to do their jobs well. And, in addition, both have a sense of personal integrity that transcends their peculiar subscription to the work ethic, and is borne, rather, out of an inner compulsion that is partly survival instinct and partly the pure of joy of realizing fully the potential of the self.

Ned Beaumont, in *The Glass Key* (1931), also possesses this sense of personal integrity. Julian Symonds perhaps overstates his case somewhat when he calls *The Glass Key* "the peak of Hammett's achievement, which is to say the peak of the crime writer's art in the twentieth century"; but there is no question about the interest which the novel's protagonist holds for the reader. If Spade and the Op confused us at times by seeming to be at no very great remove from the criminals they chased, then Ned Beaumont is even more ambiguous, being possibly a criminal himself. He's the right-hand man of a crooked, though likable, political boss, whom he serves with a sometimes curious loyalty. But he is loyal to more than just his boss; his loyalty is finally to an inner principle of selfhood which he will allow in no way to be compromised. He endures a vicious beating that goes on for pages rather than yield himself up to those who seek his complicity in schemes which, as far as the reader can tell, are little more unscrupulous than those in which Beaumont has already

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involved himself. The reader watches with fascination, if not with total comprehension, as Beaumont singlehanded brings about the novel's surprising denouement.

Finally, in *The Thin Man* (1934), Hammett's last novel and the work which virtually marks the end of his career as a creative writer, Hammett presents us, in Nick Charles, with still another variation on the theme of the tough private eye initially announced in the Op. A major difference here, however, is the presence of a woman, Nick's wife Nora, who is shown to be an equal, and therefore a worthy helpmate, to a character who in past Hammett fiction had existed without—often, in fact, despite—the women in the story. (Hammett told Lillian Hellman that he modeled Nora on her; but in the interest of completeness he pointed out to Hellman that he modeled the villainess in the story on her also.) Together, Nick and Nora make a scintillating team in what is otherwise, unfortunately, a work that represents something of a falling off of Hammett's powers.

Practically all of Hammett's detective fiction is still in print. Most of the Continental Op stories, originally published in *Black Mask*, have been gathered together in two posthumous collections (Hammett died in 1961): *The Big Knockover* (1966), edited by Lillian Hellman, and *The Continental Op* (1974), edited by Steven Marcus. The five novels have been almost continuously in print, and are now available, as are the other two books, in paperback from Random House. Together they constitute a body of writing that stands up well on its own as literature, and which can certainly lay claim to being one of the major achievements in American crime fiction in our time. And in the Continental Op and his successors, Hammett made a significant contribution to the parade of memorable characters in American literature.

Frank Occhiogrosso

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Murder Without Blood

William Haggard

Between the amateur and the professional falls a shadow. It isn't the one Eliot had in mind nor yet Yeats; rather, it is the difference between being in control and being merely self-possessed. One is reality and one is appearance. And this is what William Haggard's books are all about: professionalism, style, nuance, the difference between what appears to happen and what does happen. Haggard remarks more than once on how easily people might be made to think as some grey eminence wishes them to think. In the fullest senses of the word, he writes of the thinking man's spy.

Haggard is by no means as well known as he should be in the United States, especially since he has written 20 books in but one fewer years, has appeared in Signet books here and in Penguins in England, and has attracted the kinds of reviews which would make many a "serious" novelist envious. Yet his publishers have not learned their lessons from their author, have not discovered how to make us think of a Haggard for Hallowe'en as Dodd, Mead has convinced us that a Christie was a sign of the Christmas season. In the late 1950s he was published here by Little, Brown, then moved to Washburne, and he has been with Walker and Company for some years. They appear to be unaware that they have a professional imbedded among the amateurs they usually publish, and if the print and paper they have given to *Yesterday's Enemy*, the latest (for 1976) Haggard, is meant to compete with the quiet elegance of print and dust jacket shown by Haggard's English publisher, Cassell, then they are simply proving my (and Haggard's) point. But professionals do not complain, and it appears that Haggard has not.

Truth to tell, Haggard has not always received good reviews. His first book, *Slow Burner*, which appeared in 1958 (from Cassell, to whom he has always been loyal), won the kind of reviews glossies call "stunning," and his second book, *The Telemann Touch*, which came crowding in soon after, added substantially to his following. One of my personal favorites (and my own moment of discovering Haggard), *Venetian Blind*, based on a fine pun, was third. Nine more top drawer thrillers followed. Then came *A Cool Day for Killing* (1968), and control seemed just a bit off. Two distinctly unsatisfactory books were next, and both rightly went little reviewed in the States. In 1971 there was *Bitter Harvest*, which shows a distinct recovery (it is a Haggard favorite) and received few reviews, after which there were two more in which the touch seemed lost, the plots unnecessarily vivid, then another fine book—*The Scorpion's Tail*—and now two curious, certainly readable, less beguiling books, one of which, *The Kinsmen*, has yet to be published in America.

What has given Haggard his readership is his unwillingness to shed blood unnecessarily, his sympathy and insight into all of his figures, who are seen less in the traditional roles of villain and hero than as actors in a stylish drama in which all are motivated by a reasonable self-interest, and his subtle, ironic, detached voice. His books are not for the impatient, and while they shiver with sophisticated sexual awareness, there is never an obligatory sex scene nor an anatomical description. Some say Haggard writes like C.P. Snow, and certainly they have in common the kind of dry prose voice that makes one think immediately of hearing T.S. Eliot read one of his poems, yet a stylish voice that can be heard above all others because it is so unhurried, so cultivated, so low-pitched that it commands attention. Snow and Haggard also have this in common: they admire, understand, and make no apologies for the Establishment.

English reviewers have not always been kind to Haggard, and clearly he can get some backs up merely by dropping an "indeed" into a sentence. *The Power House* (1966), which is about the risk that an appealing and quite recognizable Prime Minister may be brought down by a cousin who is a croupier in a gambling club, was "nauseating for the in-class know-how" that it displayed. *The Arena*, about the efforts of a failing firm of merchant bankers, Bonavias to hold off a take-over by a group of counter jumpers from Bakerloo, is replete with the language of the City of London, language found by one reviewer to be

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"snobbish and silly." The same books appeal to Americans, however, who are less uptight about class connotations; the first was "even better than usual" and the second was "sophisticated . . . delicately cumulative."

Well, yes, there *are* moments when Haggard appears to believe that nuance is all. Civilized people do not make their points explicitly, for other civilized people can match them nuance for nuance. One puts on a decent suit when going to be grilled by the police. Indians are suspect, and so are Greeks and some Italians. Some Israelis are ignoble and some white South Africans are brave. Colonel Charles Russell, the series figure who is for several of the books the head of Security Executive (which does the kind of things that must not be discussed on the floor of Commons), and is then "lately of the Security Executive" and unable to remain graciously retired, "had a pension and a little money, hobbies like golf and some elegant fishing, the good health to enjoy a still vigorous life. Above all he had friends and not all were eminent. Some of them weren't even English." Sentences like these can make reviewers for the *New Statesman* grind their teeth. The reader is treated, says one annoyed reviewer, like a gawking poor relation.

Well, no. The reader is treated as though the reader could follow a complex plot, a subtle sentence, and a sense of place. For Haggard knows how to write. Those who are certain that the repetition of "And so it goes" makes Vonnegut a perceptive writer should avoid Haggard. And Anthony Powell. And Dickens. And Jane Austen. And Mrs. Gaskell, whose *Cranford* and Haggard have much in common, although Richard Clayton, who took William Haggard as a pen name, says he has never read any Gaskell.

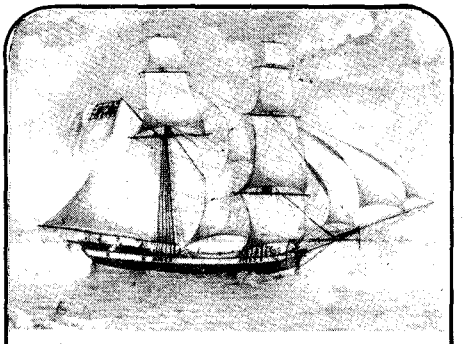
Richard Clayton was educated at Lancing, the school Evelyn Waugh chopped to such fine pieces, and at Christ Church, Oxford. He went into the Indian Civil Service, was a magistrate and sessions judge, joined the Indian Army in World War II, attended Staff College at Quetta, and was seconded off to do intelligence work. Very pukka sahib. And what is the matter with that? He was obviously looking, listening, observing steadily throughout, and if his experiences have brought him to certain conclusions, is he not entitled to those conclusions? He worked in Whitehall after the war, as Controller of Enemy Property and for the Board of Trade. He comes by his knowledge of Snow's corridors of power honestly, and he knows the countries in which he places his fictions from first hand, for the most part (one may be permitted to doubt the South American republic of Candoro [innocence?] in *Closed Circuit*). He writes carefully, protects his privacy, belongs to the Travellers, and lives in Yew Tree Cottage, having given up his flat near Harley Street and his *pied-à-terre* near Venice. He is, although now 70, probably attractive to women. All too, too Bill Buckley. Or William Haggard.

And too right, mate, too. The people of whom Haggard writes do think as he suggests. They do appreciate understatement, the oblique remark, and that one doesn't put ice in a kir. If one wants to dismiss this as snob value, one will be imprecise indeed. Charles Russell—who in 1967 had turned 60, soon retired, and rather improbably leaps from a window in Switzerland in 1976, admittedly now in late middle age but still trim—strikes one as a good bit like Haggard, for they clearly think and speak as one, both are six feet tall, and they have the earmarks of their age and class. Colonel Russell admires a competent, professional enemy. He admires loyalty, even to the wrong cause. He feels that the world is not getting better and better all the time. He looks with a cool eye at all: France, although unnamed, and De Gaulle specifically, are the enemies in *The High Wire* (1963), Italians in *The Hard Sell*, the Chinese in *A Cool Day for Killing*, the Americans in *The Conspirators*. He has a good ear for the language of class and age; he knows who will say "port wine" and who merely "port." In this day when publishers persistently insist that some new hawker of death has stepped into the shoes of John Buchan, Haggard has quietly set about filling them.

Haggard's titles, like his plots, are more intricate than they seem. *The Telemann Touch* is not only about a paid assassin on the Commonwealth island of St. Cree's, it is about a man's uncommon touch with people. *The Power House* shows the Security Executive itself as the dynamo of government. *The Powder Barrel* is about an oil-rich sheikdom, but in 1965. *The High Wire* is about a man stretched too tight, but it also ends in a swaying cable car high over the Alps. *The Arena* is about the City of London and also gives us a duel. *The Unquiet Sleep* is about an unsleeping government and also about drug usage. *The Doubtful Disciple* ultimately is about race-thinking and racism. None are quite what they seem although, unlike the conventional mystery, they are *almost* as they seem: plot itself is nuance.

By now Haggard has developed a set of figures who, as with any interlocking series, move in and out to serve different purposes. A minor figure in one book will return to play a major role in another. When Russell retires, Richard Laver takes over (in 1967), and does not badly (*The Doubtful Disciple*). By 1975, in *The Scorpion's Tail*, Laver is Sir Richard and standards have begun to fall, but Russell does not begrudge his hand-picked successor the knighthood he did not receive. The characters become what an earlier hint promised they would be. Yesterday's enemy returns to haunt the present in new ways.

Haggard writes about *Realpolitik*. Terrorist Japanese, resurgent Germans, cunningly neutral Swiss, Americans who put their country first, tinpot dictators from Latin America who prove capable of a "higher self-interest," "some ape in Africa," tall Frenchmen in pursuit of national glory—all are staples of his writing. It is not surprising that he offends on occasion, for these are not the standard goodies and baddies but



The Antelope

The Ordeal of the Recaptured Africans in the Administration of James Monroe and John Quincy Adams

John T. Noonan, Jr.

On June 29, 1820, *the Antelope*, a ship containing 281 human beings in chains, was intercepted off the Florida coast by a U.S. Treasury cutter. For the next eight years whether these beings were persons or property was disputed in the American courts. This is the story of these Africans and of the many famous Americans who became involved in the case.

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nor are they cynical spies in from the cold. Haggard feels that *The Bitter Harvest* was ill-received in America (where it was titled *Too Many Enemies*) because of its plot. *A Doubtful Disciple* was greeted with silence, and possibly with more reason.

The Bitter Harvest is a typically complex story in which Colonel Russell plays the role of watcher. Action centers on Maurice Pater, a backbencher in the House, a person of rigid integrity who will not compromise his way to the front ranks. If he could be led to support a cause previously seen to be doubtful, he could carry many with him because of that integrity. How might the unscrupulous turn a man's integrity against himself? The original effort to make him an apologist for the cause fails, he sees through it, he becomes a potential supporter of the enemy. And so he must be assassinated. All of this is unexceptional as recited here. But if the assassin is Georges Brosse, an African? If Pater has gone to South Africa, the enemy? If integrity appears to rest with the defense of *apartheid*? This plot is perhaps a little hard to bear.

And what of *The Doubtful Disciple*? Laver takes on the case because Russell points him at it. It concerns Selective Pigmentation Disease, which has been developed by the Chemical Defence Experimental Establishment in Britain. The disease attacks only those of a certain color. A scientist who worked on the disease is injured in an automobile accident and turns to religion, becoming a disciple of an evangelist. Shortly the evangelist is discredited. All seems in question and not all is worked out happily at the end. A book about racism? Or itself racist? Or about freaky religion? Or itself freaky? Might Africans turn this disease against all whites? Might an empire some felt to be racist use the disease to gain some new measure of power? This was not the kind of book likely to be taken well in 1969.

This is not ambivalence, although some think it so, Russell knows who he is and what he believes. In *The Scorpion's Tail* a group of British, Swedish, and American hippies, on pot and LSD, briefly take control of an island off Malaga. The Spanish owner and Russell exchange this conversation:

> *". . . And on my island they're having a last blind orgy.'*
>
> *"Singing I imagine.'*
>
> *"Yes. May I ask how you knew?'*
>
> *"They always sing when they're certain they've had it. It's a song called 'We Shall Not Be Moved'. When they've sung it twice they always are.'*
>
> *"You're not sympathetic, then?'*
>
> *"Of course not. But nor am I exactly hostile. I'm sorry for unfortunate children.'*
>
> *"All very liberal. All very British.'*
>
> *"Naturally. Since that's what I am.'*

Or try this: Russell is thinking himself to sleep. "What was the new word? That word was *detente*. To Russell it was an arrogant sham. Why should Russia relax? She didn't need to. She too had her options but both were hard ones. One was to come West by war, when there might not be very much left worth taking, but the second was to wait in patience till the fruit dropped from the tree intact. As Russell was convinced it must . . . . All communism had a very dark face, it was an unnecessarily tyrannical tyranny, but call it what you would, it worked. To Russell it was in a sense reassuring, as any discipline was reassuring. It might be needed one day in his own sad country when the Trotskyite students, the limousine liberals, had reduced it from decay to chaos."

Colonel Russell knows that the best working hypothesis is the simplest which covers all the known facts. He expects his operatives to provide him with clean, uncomplicated reasoning about highly complex matters. Yet he also knows that indirection has a cleanliness all its own. The American reader might well miss the point of an exchange such as the following, but only once: "Martin Dominy was a working operator but one day might be rather more. He was well worth sophisticating and Charles Russell began to do so. 'Quite,' he said finally. 'Perfectly logical and it covers the facts as you know them.' He was conscious this might sound pompous and pomposity he detested; he smiled and added blandly: 'Do you mind if I play at schoolmasters?'

"I know I've a great deal to learn, sir.'

"The tone had been mild but Martin had moved up one: He could hit back gracefully and that was important. Russell said imperturbably: 'I don't think I quite deserved that, but let's start at the beginning.'"

All of Haggard's books are worth reading, some more than others of course. Three with which to start are *The Telemann Touch*, with its admirable portrait of an assassin worth our respect; *Cool Day for Killing*, Haggard's personal favorite, with a fine opening scene of a White Rajah living in what appears to be a cross between Sarawak and Brunei waiting to be killed because he has become inconvenient to the British, who want to decolonize his tiny enclave; and my own first choice, *The Conspirators*. This last is about what appears to be a repetition of the Palomares bomb incident, when the Americans had dropped two nuclear bombs on the Spanish coast. Now they have dropped one on the shore at Devon and deny that there was a second, although someone saw a splash in the Bristol Channel at the same time. Is there another bomb? It doesn't really matter, for the question is, what can be made to seem true and by whom? The Americans who deny having dropped two, the British who obviously must have the facts, an Irish nationalist and Communist party member who has every reason to convince a nation that there are two and perhaps more? The book unfolds almost casually, yet with the reality of exceptional control, and it

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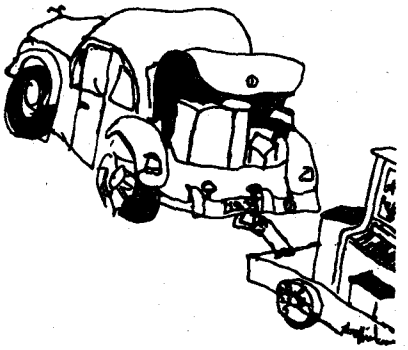

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includes a sympathetically portrayed English Indian doctor, Anthony Shripatrao Deshmukh, who has never set foot in India, and whose wholly unnecessary death is central to the plot. In the end, there is a deft depiction of Russian racism that brings the book full circle. In between Russell makes enough outrageous statements, and makes a tape of a conversation with a good friend—being taped is "an occupational risk when you talk to the Executive"—to loose a few friends among his readership.

The professional doesn't seek friends, of course. Respect yes, friends no. A bit like the British Empire at its height. Haggard, that is.

Robin W. Winks

Robin W. Winks, mystery chronicler for *TNR*, is professor of history at Yale.

Murder Without Air

Jacques Futrelle

Each in the cell of himself is almost convinced of his freedom.
—W. H. Auden

From the time of his birth in Georgia in 1875 to the moment of his death a scant 37 years later, Jacques Futrelle wrote only one detective story, "The Problem of Cell 13" featuring Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen, the celebrated "Thinking Machine."

This statement is in fact not true, though many casual readers of detective fiction will think that it is. During his brief career, Futrelle produced nearly 50 stories about the brilliant, cantankerous sleuth Van Dusen, some dozen of which are currently available in a Dover edition compiled by E. F. Bleiler. Rarely, however, are any of these other "Thinking Machine" tales reprinted in anthologies; for while no serious retrospective collection of mysteries fails to include one story by Jacques Futrelle, that story is invariably "The Problem of Cell 13." No wonder most readers suppose it is the only story Futrelle ever wrote.

Why this single piece of fiction should have overshadowed all the rest of its author's output is itself a problem worthy of the "Thinking Machine." We merely beg the question if we try to account for the popularity of the work by saying that it is the best of Futrelle's stories. What we want to know is *why* it is the best. Granted, the "impossible" challenge of the piece is irresistable; Van Dusen boasts that he can think his way out of the securest prison ever built and, when put to the test, brilliantly acquits himself by escaping on schedule from the death cell of a local penitentiary. But many of the other "Thinking Machine" stories present equally attractive "impossible" problems: the nearly magical concealment of a set of stolen jewels (*The Missing Necklace*), or the disappearance of an automobile from a road lined on both sides with stone walls (*The Phantom Motor*).

Perhaps there is some subtle resonance in "The Problem of Cell 13" to explain its extraordinary power over the reader's imagination. If so, a clue to the nature of that resonance may lie in certain striking parallels that exist between this first of the "Thinking Machine" tales and the first of Edgar Allan Poe's seminal detective stories, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." At times Futrelle seems actually to be paying self-conscious tribute to Poe, especially in the choice of a name for his detective; Augustus Van Dusen and Auguste Dupin are similar enough to invite speculation. Both tales also deal with that most aboriginal of all detective fiction subjects, the locked room problem.

For Poe the locked room problem must be seen as the corollary of a general 19th-century preoccupation with solipsism. Romantic theoreticians, advocating as they did intense self-awareness, self-examination, and self-expression, were continually haunted by the prospect of such inwardness being carried too far, of the mind becoming irrevocably trapped in itself. Walter Pater, in his famous formulation of this vision, resorted naturally to the "locked room" metaphor when he characterized life as "the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world." Poe himself was as haunted by solipsistic images of dreams and prisons as any writer of his time, and in a story like "Murders in the Rue Morgue" he makes us see the world as the projection of a single obsessive consciousness: Dupin immured in the dark locked room of his apartment, that apartment virtually indistinguishable from the one in which the killing takes place, the murderous ape clearly invoked from the gloomiest recesses of the psyche. Still, the plain object of the story is to show the superiority of ratiocination over the terrors of solipsism; by solving the mystery of the Rue Morgue murders, detective Dupin also seems to demonstrate that it is possible for the imprisoned human consciousness to escape from the locked room of itself.

Poe's interest in the locked room problem also takes the form, in such tales as "The Black Cat," "The Cask of Amontillado," and "The Fall of the House of Usher," of an obsession with the theme of premature burial. There is hardly anything more representative or poignant in all of the writer's work than the terrible cry of Roderick Usher: "We have put her living into the tomb." The

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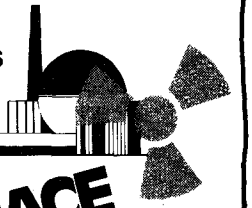

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grave is the ultimate locked room, and in a theological age the problem of escape from that room would necessarily have a mystical solution; the events of the first Easter morning, for example, constitute one of the greatest of all locked room stories. However, a century in the process of abandoning theology requires a rational solution for its problems, and as a result 19th-century readers were treated to the ingenious semaphoric contrivances which Poe wanted installed over every grave to allow the prematurely buried to signal their readiness to return to the world; were treated, too, to the "death" of Sherlock Holmes followed by his surprising but entirely reasonable revival, and to the equally ratiocinative version of the rebirth myth in "The Resurrection of Father Brown."

Against this background, the extraordinary appeal of "The Problem of Cell 13" becomes clearer; for in this story, Jacques Futrelle offers nothing less than an ingenious rewriting of the Easter myth for the modern sensibility. The secular parody begins when Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen (the name was first conceived for this particular tale and its middle initials both conceal and reveal the theological dimensions of the work) in the course of a meeting with some friends volunteers to enter a death cell—though guiltless of any crime—in order to demonstrate the possibility of escaping from it through the application of "brain and ingenuity." Coolly, Van Dusen predicts the exact day of that escape, and when his friends come for him at the prearranged time, they find the cell empty. Futrelle fills the story with many hints of its ritual significance. Van Dusen's incarceration mimics the suddenness and unpredicability of death:

"I'd prefer that it begin tomorrow," said The Thinking Machine, "Because—"
"No, now."

The sacrificial nature of the act is pointedly alluded to:

"Are you sure you want to do this?"
"Would you be convinced if I did not?" inquired The Thinking Machine.
"No."
"All right. I'll do it."

After his escape, Van Dusen is for a time seen as a mysterious extra person at the prison, duplicating an incident on the road to Emmaus. The Guard "'only let in four electricians,'" the puzzled prison warden announces. "'He let out two and says there are three left.'" "'I was the odd one,' said The Thinking Machine."

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count there is only you and I together . . .

begins T. S. Eliot's well-known version of the same event. Even the number 13 in the story is significant, the number rendered unlucky by the fact that there were 13 at table during the Last Supper.

Given the cleverness of detail in "The Problem of Cell 13," here is resonance enough to account for the remarkable appeal of this first of the "Thinking Machine" stories. What Futrelle has done in his retelling of the Easter myth is to reconstruct a mystical tale for a rational age, making the gratifying point that human reason and human will are all that is needed to defeat even death. To the nervous and/or devout, such a solipsistic boast might seem the height of folly, a gratuitous asking for trouble. Augustus Van Dusen would no doubt have mocked such superstition; nevertheless, even as "The Problem of Cell 13" was first appearing in the pages of the *Boston American*, plans were being drawn for a certain trans-Atlantic liner also intended to demonstrate the triumph of human ingenuity over death, though fated instead to provide a monstrously ironic footnote to the Futrelle story. For when the *Titanic* sank on its maiden voyage, its hull crammed with water-tight locked rooms, one of its passengers was the creator of Augustus S. F. X. Van Dusen.

Elliot L. Gilbert

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Murder With Manners

Cyril Hare

The amateur is not only the hero of the best mystery stories but often the best writer of them. In no other country has this expression of the amateur spirit flourished better than in England's green and pleasant land. Her real murders are infrequent, but her appetite for fictional ones seems to have increased by what it has not fed on. All over hard-pressed Britain the game's afoot, as if part of the population were tracking down another part, while the rest of the people were writing it up—in their spare time.

John Buchan was a bed-ridden Conservative politician when he wrote *The Thirty Nine Steps*; Erskine Childers was a clerk in the House of Commons when he drenched *The Riddle of the Sands* in his zest for small-boat sailing. Even today, P.D. James, who writes detective stories rather than "thrillers," is a hospital administrator; and Michael Gilbert, who writes both, is a solicitor. In keeping with this tradition one of the most lucid essays on "The Classical Form" of the detective story was written by Cyril Hare, the pseudonym of Alfred Alexander Gordon Clark (1900-1958), a County Court judge of civil cases who had practiced in the criminal courts after winning a first in history at Oxford. Along the way he found time to write nine crafty novels in the genre.

Hare's stories are as low-keyed and well-ordered as an English court. They move even further towards the novel of manners and away from the adventure story than E.C. Bentley's *Trent's Last Case* (1912) with its amiable hero and humane Inspector who respect and enjoy each other's intelligence. Hare's strong English face was castable as Sherlock Holmes, but the judge did not favor his stories with the Holmesian spice of the eccentric detective, the stupid police, and the bizarre crime, though he engaged in close reasoning even more than Sir Arthur did.

Hare believed in "the ingenious dovetailing of professional and lay detection," and in much of his work the self-deprecating barrister, Francis Pettigrew, and the sturdy Inspector John Mallett of the Yard independently piece together the truth hidden behind the veil of appearances, though Hare does not confine his narration to their points of view. In shifting the focus, however, he never commits the artistic error of telling us more about the criminal than the police know, a form of eavesdrop-

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ping typical of TV melodramas. He enjoyed giving the reader the surprise of discovering that what he took to be a dark blue ceiling with a gay design, not worth noticing, was really "the boundless vault of the sky." Yet his strict rule was that "the solution must account for everything" and ideally be sufficient "to satisfy twelve people, not lying cosily in bed, but sitting in a jury box, that the charge is made out." If his reasoning is as sober as a judge's, his misdirection is as smooth as a conjuror's.

As an amateur magician, I know that a good one avoids over-complicating his effects and his methods. Only in one book (*Death is No Sportsman*) does Hare bog us down in maps and timetables, and he has the grace to keep his cast of characters small, according to his own principle: "It is comparatively easy to hide a joker in a full pack. The three-card trick takes some doing." When Hare finally pulls a culprit out of his hat, the effect is surprising and the method simple. These virtues are not common in the detective story.

Sometimes serious novels, like E.L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel*, have genuine elements of detection in them, as did the Apocryphal *Daniel* in the story of Susannah and the elders. Similarly, the detective-story writer, Hare believed, can get "very near indeed to the status of a good novelist," but his getting there takes place within the conventions of the genre and so he "remains in bonds, none the less." Hare noted that characters which must exist for the sake of detecting or being suspected cannot be fully developed without revealing too much. Because he recognized these limits to the form, he wrote stories which are never pedantic, pompous, or self-consciously "literary," and he never fell into the contemporary habit of engaging in psychological or sociological punditry, which substitutes for detection some banal revelations about a fashionably sordid milieu.

Close reasoning, however, is never enough for a novel. Dorothy Sayers compared the ideal reader to an intelligent terrier chasing a ball, but why should we be willing to chase after it unless we like the person who threw it and the place where we are playing? My pleasure in Hare does not depend entirely on his ingenuity which in *Tenant for Death*, *Suicide Excepted*, and *That Yew Tree's Shade*, for example, cannot compensate for a certain dessication. Hare is most attractive when he firmly locates his plots in some credibly interesting corner of England, whether it be the circuit courts in the south, the muniment room of a manor house, a small-town symphony society, or a stag hunt. Furthermore, he comes at these settings with an unconventional eye, which is never sentimental or callous. In *An English Murder* he looks at the

manor house during Christmas through the detached and curious perceptions of a Jewish professor of history from Prague, who knows how much of an anachronistic past still survives in postwar Socialist England. In *He Should Have Died Hereafter* (in America, *Untimely Death*) Hare approaches the stag hunt indirectly through Pettigrew's middle-aged nostalgia while experiencing an uncanny repetition of a youthful riding accident.

In his polemic against the detective story Raymond Chandler was at least right to prefer the English variety because its manor houses "really existed all around and not just the part that the camera sees." Hare pointed out that the amateur can bring to the detective story "a background of solid truth" for his characters by making them a natural part of some social group. He puts a lot of "English" on his plots not only because of their twists and settings, but because he uses his experience of law to provide a basis for unusual criminal motives. On a walk in the Temple, the quiet legal heart of London, I found a court called "Hare," and his best stories unobtrusively use his knowledge about the statute of limitations, inheritance and divorce law, or even an 18th century constitutional crisis. He wears his robes of legal learning lightly and often gently satirizes his judges. One of them is as excited by coming upon a "barred entail" during a trial as an ornithologist is in finding a hoopoe on his lawn. Another says he is in favor of extending the death penalty of hanging to habitual thieves and reckless drivers ("'Stretching the stretching, in fact,' Pettigrew murmured to Derek") because they would be "better out of this world." Hare deflates his sententiousness with a bare bodkin of irony:

> *"And in the next," said the Chaplain unexpectedly, "they may be sure to find Justice."*
>
> *Of all the solecisms at this unhappy lunch party, this was undoubtedly the most devastating. A man of God had actually presumed to make a public profession of his beliefs—beliefs, moreover which hinted at the existence of a justice superior to that dispensed in the High Court! It put a summary end to a discussion which, if never very profound, had at least been lively, and cast a complete pall over the rest of the proceedings* (Tragedy at Law).

Hare disdained all the cheap evasions of the formal detective-story. "A mad murderer explains everything," exults an obscure writer in *With a Bare Bodkin*. "Supplies his own motive. Needn't behave in character. Can kill most improbable people. It's a piece of cake." When Hare incorporates a love story in the novel, it is so muted that Pettigrew

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only discovers his own feelings and his girl's first name from reading about them in the file of a County policeman, who once corrects a witness for misquoting Shakespeare. "Our police are wonderful, aren't they?" Pettigrew remarks to his girl. In his "muffled compassion for human nature," as Elizabeth Bowen called it, Hare's tongue is never very far from being in his cheek. The classic form has often been a vehicle for conservative prejudices, but his stories of the 1940s and 1950s are as free of axe-grinding as they are of axe-murders. E.C. Bentley in dedicating his book to G.K. Chesterton reminded him of those early days "when we embraced the most severe literature, and ourselves produced such light reading as was necessary." Hare is a reminder that the possibility did not disappear with Edwardian England.

Vintage Hare is for fastidious tastes, those who find Christie, Carr, and Queen too clever by half, Innes too donnish, and Freeling too fashionably wordy. Hare is too little known in America, and even my university's distinguished library has only two of his novels. The Garland Series of *Fifty Classics of Crime Fiction* has paid tribute by a hardcover edition of *When the Wind Blows*, his story about a musical society. At the inflated price of $12.50, however, it is no substitute for those sturdy Penguins which can still be found in English second-hand stores. American paperback editions of a handful of Hares would be the most suitable form of new life for this amateur craftsman at a time when the paperback shelves are awash with the detritus of professional hacks.

Cushing Strout

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Murder Most Tidy

Ngaio Marsh

In Chapter IV, page 58 of the first edition of *A Man Lay Dead* (1934) Roderick Alleyn, Chief Detective-Inspector, CID Scotland Yard, makes his first appearance on the scene of crime. He strolls urbanely into his initial case—a real-death body has turned up for the "corpse" during the Murder Game then fashionable at English country-house parties—to begin a career that has provided many a diverting, puzzling, and, at times, maddening moment for mystery readers over the last four decades.

A few pages after Alleyn's quiet entrance, Dame Ngaio Marsh gives a quick introduction to her sleuth: "Angela had time for a good long stare at her first detective. Alleyn did not resemble a plain-clothes policeman she felt sure, nor was he in the romantic manner—white-faced and gimlet-eyed. He looked like one of her Uncle Hubert's friends, the sort that they knew would 'do' for house parties. He was very tall, and lean, his hair was dark, and his eyes grey with corners that turned down. They looked as if they would smile easily but his mouth didn't. 'His hands and his voice are grand,' thought Angela, and subconsciously she felt less miserable."

And those of us who cherish an affection for the stylishly-told traditional British mystery, with discreet murder among civilized enemies, also have felt less miserable because of Alleyn and Dame Ngaio Marsh. Every two years or so now, it is comforting to know that Alleyn is due back for another sophisticated duel of wits and that Dame Ngaio again will be viewing the scene with a gently ironic eye to spot human and social foibles, whether it be the gaiety merchants and dance bands of the late '40s, the splotch-and-drip artists of the '70s, or the semi-dotty, semi-erotic cults of any decade. In a world of irrational violence, it is positively cheering to find that tidily-ordered, proper murders still are being committed for such perfectly valid reasons as jealousy, greed, passion, or hate.

As Dame Ngaio recalls it, her sleuth was born on a very wet Saturday afternoon in 1931 in a basement flat off Sloane Square in London, where she then was working for a house-decorating firm. She had finished reading a detective story ("either a Christie or a Sayers, I think it was") and began to wonder idly whether she might try the same. So she splashed to a nearby stationer's shop and bought six tupenny exercise books, a pencil, and a pencil sharpener. She already was equipped with a sharp wit, observant eye, inventive mind, and graceful prose style.

Today, at 77, Dame Ngaio is writing as well as ever, which can be very well indeed. Some of her recent novels, particularly *Black as He's Painted* of three years ago, can stand beside her best, including *Enter a Murderer* (1935), *Overture to Death* (1936), *Final Curtain* (1947), and *Clutch of Constables* (1969). There is none of the embarrassment of those waning latter-day Christies.

"With the passing of Agatha Christie, Dame Ngaio Marsh stands as the undisputed doyenne of myster writers," proclaims a promotional blurb for *Last Ditch*, published this spring as the latest Alleyn case. The more ardent fans of Dame Ngaio would argue the timing. For Marsh always has been a far better writer and novelist than Christie even as she has worked in the shadow of her slightly older contemporary's incredible mass popularity. Dame Ngaio handles the language with an impeccable sense of style. If she can be fiendishly clever in concocting murder plots, she never has been content to settle for a flashy puzzle, letting cardboard characters fall where they may. With a single phrase, she can limn a character into the memory: The manager of the Metronome nightclub is "in full control of his accurately graded cordiality" when we meet him briefly in *A Wreath for Rivera* (1949).

In her fondness for background and character, Dame Ngaio sometimes does neglect to get on with the main business of detection. Then, particularly in the earlier books, she hastens to retrieve with post-murder interrogations and perhaps a reprise of suspects, motives, and movements. It is as if she suddenly has remembered that she really set out to write a detective story and not a novel of manners. Dame Ngaio is an acquired taste, and the leisurely pace is not to everyone's liking. Sometimes she ends up with a forced solution. But even when a Marsh mystery misfires, it is done with style, redeemed by a memorable character or a skewered pretension to recall with relish.

In recounting the story of the birth of her detective-hero, Dame Ngaio recalls how, on that long-distant wet Saturday afternoon of 1931, she decided on

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"comparative normality" in the face of the vogue for amateur sleuths with celebrated eccentricities in the Holmesian tradition. Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot has his magnificent mustaches, patent-leather pumps, and little grey cells. H. C. Bailey's Reggie Fortune keeps exclaiming, over and over, "my dear chap!" Dorothy L. Sayers's Lord Peter and, later, Margery Allingham's Albert Campion are lank, languid, well-pedigreed, exceedingly facetious young men who cultivate a misleading vacuity of expression. In America, there is Philo Vance, who has the habit of speaking, as Dame Ngaio archly notes, in "a strange language that his author, S. S. Van Dine, had the nerve to attribute, in part, to Balliol College, Oxford."

Dame Ngaio didn't want to "tie mannerisms, like labels," around her hero's neck. Fortunately, she didn't altogether succeed, for our affection for people and characters embraces their quirks as well as their virtues. Alleyn is an attractive, civilized, compassionate man with an accidental elegance and a witty humor drawn from understatement. In the early days, he is acutely embarrassed when the popular press refers to the "handsome inspector." He uses the affectionate nicknames of Br'er Fox and Foxkins for his aide, Inspector Fox. Alleyn, as Dame Ngaio had hoped would turn out, is "that nice chap with more edge to him than met the eye—a good deal more."

Yet Alleyn, though a professional policeman and a nice chap rather than a snobbish amateur sleuth, still is very much within the mold of the Gentleman-Detective of the Golden Thirties of the English detective story. His father was in the diplomatic service as is his older brother. His mother is Lady Alleyn, who breeds Alsatians. As we are told in the first introduction, he would "do" for Uncle Hubert's house parties. In *The Nursing Home Murder*, Alleyn gossips like an old school boy about Lady O'Callaghan: "She was a Rattisbon. All the Rattisbons are a bit frosty. I was at school with her brother—who was, of course, called 'Ratsbane.'"

Along with her Gentleman-Detective, Dame Ngaio has retained other trappings from the Golden Thirties mystery even as she has moved with the contemporary scene (it's bearded, scruffy painters and drug smuggling in *Last Ditch*). She delights in bizarre murder weapons, country-house amenities, dotty English lords, vicars, village busybody spinsters, maps and a cast of characters.

Some of Dame Ngaio's murder weapons are diabolically ingenious. A jeroboam of champagne provides a spirited demise for a theatrical producer when it drops on him in *Vintage Murder*. A gossipy spinster is murdered by a pistol rigged to a soft pedal of a piano as she launches into the opening bars of an explosive Rachmaninoff's romantic prelude (*Overture to Death*). The ambassador from a new African state is impaled on a plumed spear in *Black as He's Painted*. A proper murder doesn't have to be bloodless or unimaginative.

The theater, on and off stage, provides the background for some of Dame Ngaio's most successful mysteries. Her "damery," as she likes to call it, came from her contributions to the theater in New Zealand rather than for her considerable accomplishments as a writer of literate mysteries. Ngaio Marsh was born in New Zealand in the last year of the last century. Her birthplace explains the unusual first name—"ngaio" is a Maori word with several meanings: light-on-the-water, a tree with a white flower, a bug that infests that tree, or, finally, clever.

Over the years, as Dame Ngaio has refined her talents, Alleyn has matured as a character. He has been promoted to superintendent. A bachelor for the first half dozen books or so, he meets, courts, and marries Agatha Troy over the span of two more novels. A portrait painter of distinction and a woman of independent character, Troy does not intrude on her husband's professional career. But she sometimes does get involved innocently in an investigation. In *Clutch of Constables* (paintings not police officers), Troy, on a Thames cruise, provides information for Alleyn to help in the capture of the picturesque thieves. She paints a portrait of Boomer, the imperious, proud African leader with the affectionate nickname from his school boys with Alleyn, and provides some diverting interludes in *Black as He's Painted*. Both Boomer and Alleyn come dangerously close to being upstaged by Lucy Lockett, a most fetching cat who unabashedly seduces Mr. Whipplestone, a retired Foreign Service officer and a delightful chap himself.

The Alleyn son, Ricky, is by now down from the university, trying to write a first novel in the solitude of a British channel island, when he becomes a central figure in *Last Ditch*. And it is pleasant to watch as

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Inspector Fox, that stolid, plain-thinking and worthy companion in Alleyn's investigations, chats up a French maid for valuable information after all those hours spent listening to French on the gramophone in an earlier book.

Somewhere, perhaps it is in her autobiography, *Black Beech and Honeydew*, Dame Ngaio mentions her favorite quotation from Keats: "How happy is such a voyage of conception, what delicious, diligent indolence!" It well might be said of her mystery novels.

Jean M. White

Jean M. White writes about mysteries for The Washington Post.

Murder Number One

Earl Derr Biggers

With the exception of a couple of Dashiell Hammett characters, Sam Spade and Nick Charles, no character in detective fiction has become more famous on the basis of fewer official appearances than Earl Derr Biggers's Chinese sleuth Charlie Chan. The Honolulu policeman appeared in only six novels, beginning with *The House Without a Key* (1925), in which he is a comparatively minor character, and ending with *The Keeper of the Keys* (1932), by which time he has taken over center stage.

As with Spade and Charles, most of Chan's fame has been spread through hundreds of apocryphal cases in films, radio, television, and comic strips. As entertaining as many of these adaptations are, they have done Chan and his creator a disservice. The Charlie Chan of the six novels is a complex, multifaceted character. His screen equivalent is a smug, infallible quotation-spouter.

The greatest irony is that Chan has come to be regarded as an ethnic stereotype in some quarters. At the time of his creation, he represented a deliberate corrective to the sinister and villainous figures, most notably exemplified by Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu, that typified the Chinese to readers of popular fiction in the '20s and before.

In an era when a popular song could present with a straight face a line like "In Limehouse, where yellow chinkies love to play," Biggers's sensitivity and commitment to racial understanding were exceptional. Early in the series, he uses the term Chinaman in third person narration, but by the last book he has come to realize that the term is an offensive one to the Chinese. When a character uses the word, Chan takes it as an insult only because he knows it is intended that way.

Earl Derr Biggers was already well-established as a skilled and successful writer long before he created Charlie Chan. Born in Warren, Ohio, in 1884 and educated at Harvard, he served for several years as a columnist and drama critic for the Boston *Traveler* before the 1913 novel *Seven Keys to Baldpate* gave him his first fame. George M. Cohan would turn *Baldpate*, a light romance with a touch of mystery, into a successful stage vehicle. Biggers moved to New York to write plays of his own, as well as such novels as *Love Insurance* (1914) and *The Agony Column* (1916).

Like most successful popular writers, Biggers strongly believed in what he was doing. He claimed that editors never told him what to write, just asked him to do the best job he could. They probably didn't have to tell him, since his inclinations as a writer were so much in accord with the requirements of slick romantic fiction of the day. In his Harvard days, he was notorious among his classmates for preferring Kipling and Richard Harding Davis to Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson. According to his *New York Times* obituary, "Biggers said they read Keats to one another in the twilight at Harvard at that time, urging him to leave the room before they began."

Delicate health and the promise of film work led Biggers to move his family to California in the mid-'20s. By this time, Charlie Chan had made his debut but was not yet a world-famous character. By the time of Biggers's death in 1933, Warner Oland was solidly established as the definitive screen Chan and the Chinese sleuth occupied most of his creator's writing efforts.

All six Charlie Chan novels were serialized in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and a perusal of the illustrations charts Chan's growing fame. When *The House Without a Key* began its run in the September 24, 1925 issue, Chan did not appear in the first installment, and even when he did make his unobtrusive debut in the second installment, illustrator William Liepse was too preoccupied with the story's young lovers to offer a visual depiction of him. W. H. D. Koerner's illustrations for the second novel, *The Chinese Parrot* (1926), show Chan as youngish, not very fat and clean-shaven. The lack of a mustache is true to Biggers's descriptions of Chan—like Fu Manchu, he acquired facial hair for film work. By the appearance of the fifth novel, *Charlie Chan Carries On* (1930), artist Henry Raleigh gives us a Chan with the look of the movies about him. He has become much fatter, acquired dramatically sloping eyebrows, and grown a mustache much like Warner Oland's.

Aside from the superficial matter of a mustache, how does Chan in the books differ from Chan in the movies? He does have a large number of children, thoroughly Americanized in their speech and partially so in their values, but they stay on Punchbowl Hill. They don't dog their famous father's footsteps shouting, "Hey, Pop, I got a swell clue," nor are they ever referred to by such labels as "number-one son."

A Japanese policeman named Kashima, ambitious but inept, serves a comic relief role in some of the novels similar to that of the sons in the movies. Kashima serves to illustrate the most unattractive aspect of Chan's character. Himself the target of racial prejudice, subtle and otherwise, in all the novels, he vents his own irrational bigotry toward the Japanese on Kashima.

It is the conflict of Eastern and Western values that makes Charlie Chan an interesting character. He criticizes the ambition, the curiosity, the lack of tranquility of the Caucasian, but he sees more and more of these unworthy attributes in himself and is worried by it. Proud of his own vocabulary and command of the English language, he is upset by his offspring's use of slang. Listening to the pidgin English of a Chinese servant, he is torn between shame at the indignity of the man's condition and the feeling that somehow he has retained a basic Chinese identity that Chan has lost. Visiting the head of his family associa-

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tion in San Francisco, he is excoriated for his association with the "foreign devil police." Proud that his children are American citizens, he is ambivalent about his own nationality.

Chan's speech patterns change and develop in the course of the series. His first line of dialogue, "No knife are present in neighborhood of crime," illustrates a grammatical problem that will disappear by the third book in the series. In the first book, he is more given to picturesque language than to aphorisms and quotations. He says, "Is it that you are in the mood to dry up a plate of soup?" And, "Stone walls are crumbling now like dust. Through many loopholes light stream in like rosy streaks of dawn." And, at a dramatic moment, "Relinquish the fire arms . . . or I am forced to make fatal insertion in vital organ belonging to you."

In *The Chinese Parrot*, Chan must impersonate a Chinese servant, speaking such lines as, "Maybe you wantee catch 'um moah fiah, hey, boss?" It is painful to him—"All my life, I study to speak fine English words. Now I must strangle all such in my throat, lest suspicion rouse up." He draws the line at saying "velly." Only with the third novel, *Behind That Curtain* (1928), does he begin to fill the air with Chinese proverbs like "Falling hurts least those who fly low." Perhaps influenced by the movies, his quotation-spouting reaches its height in the last novel: "Only the thief oils his wheelbarrow." "The fool in a hurry drinks his tea with a fork." "Eggs should not dance with stones."

Biggers's strengths as a writer were his gently humorous style and his ability to bring his characters to life within the limits of commercial fiction. As a creator of mystery plots, he was not in a class with his contemporaries S. S. Van Dine and Ellery Queen. Though he would throw a paltry clue or two the reader's way on occasion, fair play was not manifest in most of his novels. Where Van Dine decreed there must be no love interest to detract from the ratiocination, with Biggers there was always a love interest, though it became less central as Charlie Chan's part grew larger. Only in *The Black Camel* (1929), perhaps the best all around Chan novel, is there a gathering-of-the-suspects scene of the kind familiar from the Chan films.

In the last novel of the series, perhaps showing the belated influence of Van Dine and Queen, Biggers begins to show an interest in the fair play aspect of detective story writing, carefully showcasing his clues. Had he lived to write more Chan novels, they surely would have been more tightly and deviously plotted than their predecessors and would have enhanced Biggers's reputation with such purists as Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor, who dismiss him with one perfunctory paragraph in their massive bibliography, *A Catalogue of Crime* (1971). But improved craftsmanship would not have changed Biggers's greatest achievement: the creation of one of the immortal fictional detectives.

Jon L. Breen

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Murder in the Outback

Arthur W. Upfield

Though our stereotypical image of the setting of the classical detective story will no doubt remain what W. H. Auden called "Mayhem Parva"—the English country house and village—the genre has been adapted to a variety of climes and locales. American examples obviously spring to mind—the New York City of S. S. Van Dine, Ellery Queen and Emma Lathen, the California of Hammett, Chandler, and Macdonald—but in actuality one could construct quite a world atlas of crime, passing from country to country under the protection of a remarkable galaxy of international detectives: Nicholas Freeling's Inspector Van der Valk of Holland; Simenon's Maigret of France; Sjövall and Wahlöo's Beck of Sweden; Keating's Ghote of India; Van Gulik's Judge Dee of China; Marquand's Mr. Moto of Japan and Biggers's Charlie Chan of Hawaii, to name just a few, though no doubt enough to jangle the nerves of any international criminal. Significantly, though the settings of these stories are global in variety, most of the writers are of Anglo-American or Northern European cultural backgrounds, predominantly the former. The detective story situation works with many different cultural settings because the investigation of a puzzling crime casts light on the workings of a society by catching it at a moment of anomaly and disruption. By exploring the ramifications of such moments, the skillful writer and observer can reveal to us some of the prevailing terms of the social comedy. However, the angle of vision enforced by the conventions of the classical detective story is inevitably a limited one, because its basic assumptions are bound to the social and ideological patterns of Western bourgeois democracies in the 19th and 20th centuries. The quest for cross-cultural understanding so richly developed in a novel like *A Passage to India* is difficult within the confines of the detective story, for, whatever the setting, the classical formula seems to require the importation of certain presuppositions about society, law, and morality from the Anglo-American tradition. This is why most of the writers who deal with detection in other countries come from a predominantly English cultural tradition.

One of the most interesting writers who has explored the interface between different cultures through the medium of the detective story is the Australian, Arthur W. Upfield. His stories illustrate the power of the detective story formula to bring out distinctive qualities of morals and manners in high relief. But they also show how the formula operates to limit the expression of deeper and more complex cultural perspectives.

In most of his work, Upfield deals with crimes that have taken place in the interior regions of Australia, the "outback" which Upfield himself knew well from the years he spent in cattle-raising before he turned to the writing of detective stories. In this region, which resembles the American frontier of the 19th century in many ways, three very different cultures conflict and interact in a complex web: the modern, urban and national culture of the coastal regions, predominantly English in its traditions and represented in the outback by state and national agencies, such as the police;

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the white culture of the outback itself with its distinctive way of life dominated by the great distances and climactic extremes of the region and by the diverse national backgrounds and cultures of its immigrants; and the completely distinctive aboriginal culture with its age-old tribal ways in various stages of assimilation into the dominant white culture.

To mediate these different cultures as they interact around the crisis posed by a crime, Upfield invented a detective figure who is surely one of the most fascinating in the literature: the half-caste Napoleon Bonaparte. Himself the product of an interracial marriage, "Bony" as he prefers to be called, spans the gulf between cultures. Inheritor of the tribal lore and skills of his aboriginal mother, Bony not only possesses insight into the aboriginal mind, he also has the aboriginal ability of tracking and living off the country. Some of his feats at reading footprints and other signs would put Sherlock Holmes to shame. Upfield's ability to represent the customs, beliefs, and powers of aboriginal culture through the mediating consciousness of Bony is one of the most compelling features of his books. Just as Thomas Berger dramatized the American Plains Indian culture through the experiences of a white boy captured and raised by the Cheyenne Indians in *Little Big Man,* Upfield at his best gives us a rich and complex sense of aboriginal culture through the perceptions of his half-caste protagonist.

Detective Inspector Bonaparte is steeped, as Upfield himself must have been, in aboriginal myth and legend. As a man once "sealed" into a tribe, Bony is powerfully aware of the psychological potency of ceremony. The dreaded ritual of "pointing the bones" and the fear it evokes in a person who has gone through the process of tribal initiation plays a significant role in a number of Upfield's stories, in one of which Bony himself suffers the trauma of being the object of this form of magic. Such episodes show Upfield's ability to evoke the psychological reality of aboriginal culture. While Upfield was certainly not a trained anthropologist, his stories are richly evocative of the aura of tribalism and its age-old way of life.

Yet, as the agent of a national police authority, Bony also represents the thrust of modernization with its emphasis on centralized authority and bureaucratic administration and its hierarchy of educated expertise. Though there is some conflict between the two sides of Bony's nature, his role as a detective requires that he be able to use his aboriginal intuition and his civilized authority in a unified way to penetrate the truth of crime and restore the threatened fabric of society. He becomes, in the end, another avatar of that mythical figure who has played such an important role in the imaginative history of European imperialism: the man who is at once the epitome of the British gentleman and yet can fully penetrate into the mysteries of alien cultures. We find this fantasy represented in the legends which grew up around such historical figures as Chinese Gordon and Lawrence of Arabia, and in such fictional characters as John Buchan's Sandy Arbuthnot, Kipling's Kim, and Edgar Rice Burroughs's Lord Greystoke, otherwise known as Tarzan of the Apes. These figures express the fantasy that the profound cultural conflicts inherent in the relationship between imperial power and colonial peoples, and modernizing Europeans and traditional cultures can be effectively mediated and justly resolved. Upfield's Bony is in this tradition. His function as detective mediator limits the degree to which Upfield can fully dramatize the tragic conflict between the aboriginal Australian tribal cultures and the colonizing Europeans. But it is to Upfield's credit that within the limits of the essentially comic mode of the detective story, he weaves a richly colored tapestry of the conflicting cultural strains that come together in the Australian outback.

The outback itself is both the setting and the subject of Upfield's most striking work. The vast desert and semi-desert landscape of Australia's interior broods in the background of Bony's cases, its strange flora and fauna and mysterious geological features creating an appropriate stage for murder and its exposure:

> *What is geographically named the "Lake Eyre basin" roughly comprises two hundred thousand square miles and most of it is below sea level. Save along the western edge where run the rare trains northward to Alice Springs, the white population is less than two hundred, and the aborigines number but a hundred more. The rivers, when they run every decade or so, run uphill. Sand dunes float in the air and kangaroos leap from cloud to cloud. The horizon is never where it ought to be. A tree one moment is a shrub and the next a radio mast. A reptilian monster sunning itself on a mountain ridge is, after all, a frilled lizard sprawled on the dead branch of a tree partially buried in a sand dune.*

This "deceitful landscape" plays a direct role in some of Upfield's best stories. In *Death of a Lake,* for example, a body is concealed in a periodic lake. As the body cannot be retrieved until the lake dries up, detective and suspects wait anxiously on the receding edge of the water. Finally, in a thunderous climax marked by the panicked flight of rabbits and kangaroos driven wild by the disappearance of their water source, the lake bed finally gives up its hidden corpse and Bony is able to reveal the murderer. In such moments, the landscape takes on a moral and mythical ambience integrated with the movement of the story.

The people of the outback—the murderers, victims, and suspects who pose Bony's problems of detection—constitute a thin and fragile layer of human community struggling to maintain its hold on the vast emptiness of the landscape. Far from the complex modern society of the cities, and equally distant in another direction from the aboriginal tribalism of the native inhabitants, the outback communities have developed their own distinctive culture, based on intense ties of personal and family loyalty involving both white ranchers and the semi-civilized aboriginal groups who work periodically on the ranches and live on the margins of settlement. These are people outside both traditional tribalism and modern urban civilization. They have created their own form of community which is in many ways an admirable mixture of the intense human unity of tribal culture and the individualism of modern society. Yet the outback community is deeply vulnerable to the crisis posed by murder, for crimes of violence not only threaten the texture of loyalties on which such a subculture depends, but require the intrusion of outside authority into the community.

Bony, himself divided between his aboriginal heritage and his role as agent of the modern state, has the complex perceptions and skills necessary to mediate these cultural tensions, to expose the murderer and to restore the threatened fabric of the community. In his best works, such as *The Bushman Who Came Back, The Will of the Tribe* and *The New Shoe,* Upfield develops Bony not so much as ratiocinative deducer from clues, but as penetrator into the

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complex of local loyalties which shield the murderer from outside authority. One of the recurrent, haunting images of his stories is of the "shuttered eyes" of aboriginal leaders refusing to reveal their knowledge because of their sense of loyalty to some local stockman or family. Bony's character gives him the understanding, compassion and psychological skill to enter fully into the moral and emotional ethos of particular outback communities and, because he has this capacity, he is able to solve the crime without dissolving the community.

At the top of his form, Upfield turned the detective story into a rich fable of the interaction of cultures and their differing systems of authority, justice, morality and community. Set against the extraordinary social and geological landscape of the Australian outback, these fables are set in motion by the social crisis of murder and then mediated by the idealized figure of the half-caste detective, Napoleon Bonaparte. Thus, Upfield's work takes on some of the depth, simplicity, and aboriginal mystery of the native legends which his detective often repeats and which evidently fascinated Upfield himself. In all, Upfield published over two dozen detective novels about Bony. Some of these are fairly routine attempts at mystification based on the usual crowded parade of clues, witnesses, alibis, and red herrings. But those five or six Upfields which fully develop the magical combination of Australian landscape, cultural conflict and the ambiguous relationship of law, loyalty, and justice are among the major achievements of the genre. I am told that Australian television has recently produced a series based on the exploits of Bony. I have not seen any of these episodes and cannot say how successful they are, but I hope that some enterprising American distributor will make them available here. They would give us a wonderfully refreshing contrast to the hard-boiled urban police thrillers which presently dominate our screens.

John G. Cawelti

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Murder with Dignity

Rex Stout

When devoted mystery lovers think of Nero Wolfe, they are apt to dwell on his eccentricities, such as his love of beer and orchids and his notorious irascibility. Fortunately Wolfe also presents to detective fiction fans and critics alike a systematic explanation of his literary genre, as well as a thorough justification for his own style of life. If social and philosophical relativism is a dominant force in the 20th century, then Nero Wolfe, the sometimes ludicrous creation of Rex Stout, consistently and completely embodied the modern tradition. Wolfe's interrelated and integrated views of the world, of life, of his personal and professional place in the scheme of people and things, and of civilized man's ethical obligations dealt insightfully with the confusing complexities of an age without truths.

Nero Wolfe saw the planet as the common container for divergent individuals, peoples, and beliefs. Moreover, society itself was, he thought, subject to cyclical historical variations which made this or that period more comfortable to particular types of characters. For instance, Wolfe's confidential assistant, Archie Goodwin, noted (*Fer-De-Lance*, 1934) that his employer believed that the current age of radio was the "perfect era for the sedentary man." Marvels of technology, alien to Greek civilization, had made possible the fruits of extended and distant communication even for persons inclined to leisure, repose, and stationary inertia. At the same time, Wolfe recognized that there had also been a transition in the dominant values of the society which produced a mass media. If peoples in other times had worshipped beauty, humanity, in the age of materialism they worshipped mammon. Thus, Nero Wolfe saw a world in constant flux throughout time, one deprived of eternal verities.

Accepting a world of uncertainty, Wolfe was moved to decry the absurdities of life. He sardonically noted that he could not excuse the existence of others when he lacked even a rationale for his own being. Never a piker, he even extended this blanket of purposelessness to encompass the human race. Wolfe remarked that female sexuality, as a prelude to reproductive intercourse, was humanity's main weapon in its "gallant struggle against the menace of the insects." For Nero Wolfe not only individuals but the species itself failed of rational explanation beyond the facts of biological accident.

Though Wolfe's world lacked eternal truths and first causes, it was not also devoid of reason and, therefore, allowed for some understandings of the way things were. In any case, while he acknowledged a relative existence, Wolfe was also able to come to some coherent explanations for its reality. The prime fact of being for Wolfe was that there were limits to any human's knowledge, perceptiveness, and power. Over and over again he instructed Goodwin and others on their indisputable limitations, not as individual persons, but as members of a race. In *Prisoner's Base* (1952) he reasoned that since all people lacked omniscience, no one should blame himself for the distasteful results of unanticipated situations. At another time he scorned hypothetical questions as undeserving of serious replies since no one could accurately predict even their own actions. In a later mystery, *Some Buried Caesar* (1939), Wolfe cajoled an official who was reluctant to violate long-established rules in order to catch a murderer. Wolfe pleaded that a sign of intelligence was a capacity "to welcome a singularity when the need" arose. In this statement he supposed, as he had on other occasions, that a wise person recognized that people usually possessed only limited knowledge. Given this assumption, even the most carefully considered and planned rules could not be expected to adequately deal with all future circumstances. The intelligence to which he referred was the ability to perceive just such an unanticipated situation.

Another of Wolfe's reasons for accepting uncertainty as a requisite of consciousness was the makeup of humanity as a whole. In *Too Many Cooks* (1938) he admitted to a group of black men that a rule of life should be never to expect the same response from any two

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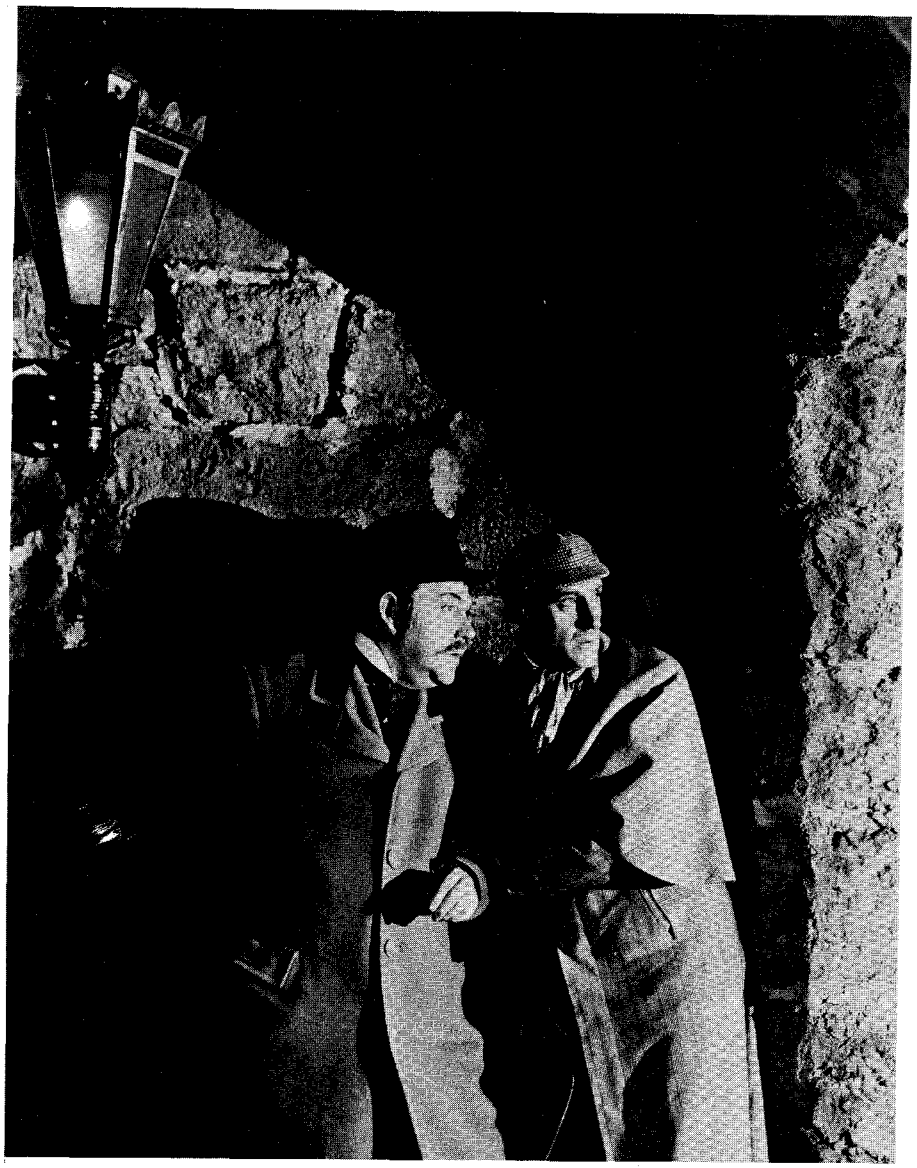
individuals. At the same time he noted that aside from individual differences one had to consider "racial and national and tribal" dissimilarities. While social and cultural conditioning made people different in general ways, Wolfe also recognized more basic predispositions and their origins. Through "exigencies of birth and training" or, if one preferred, the designs of God every human was unique. For this reason not just responses but perceptions, understandings, and talents varied from person to person, making calculation and expectation merely fools' errands.



When others might have despaired at this certainty of uncertainty, Wolfe reveled in it and used it as the foundation for his own pursuits. On the simplest level he justified his profession as an example of an individual freely following his own preferences. He pointed out to a critic that "each of us has his special set of values, and if you expect me to respect yours, you must respect mine." Moreover, Wolfe understood that those who looked askance at private detection merely expressed a point of view, which was no more or less truthful than his own. To a great chef *(Too Many Cooks)*, he said that all people found some endeavor that they could abide. How one viewed a particular line of work was neither clear nor constant. For instance, some might consider a scandal seeking politician as less worthy than a trash collector, though both dealt in refuse. To Wolfe the significant difference between the two was the size of their remuneration. If the worth of a job was up to the worker to determine, then the only objective standard could be the pay and Wolfe made it a point not to "soil" himself "cheaply."

If Wolfe accepted the need to soil himself by making money he did so with reservations. As he told Goodwin in *The Red Box* (1937) he could not "remake the universe and must therefore put up with this one." So Wolfe accepted inconveniences and discomforts, such as working, while stubbornly declining to "make a virtue of necessity," but also refusing to "whimper under its lash." Although he did not whimper, Wolfe often required a goad from Goodwin and sometimes, in frustration permitted himself to slip into prolonged fits of gourmet gluttony. Despite these personal inconsistencies, he demanded of himself a stoical attitude toward intrusions, even those of catastrophic proportions. Life for man must, of necessity, be a symphony of the unwanted and the unexpected. Therefore, the only rational response must be to deal with every new situation calmly and logically. For this reason he deplored emotional responses and feared what he considered hysteria in women. On a higher level, he justified rationality and stoicism with the argument that an emotional response made a man into a "dog baring its teeth and he forfeits the privileges of civilized discourse" *(And Be a Villian,* 1948).

When Wolfe reluctantly accepted cases, and thereby work, he could console himself with the expectation of fees that, by themselves, entitled him to hold a high opinion of his chosen profession. Also, given his declared freedom to interpret his work in any way he saw fit, Wolfe found solace in what he declared was the artistry of his function. Certainly, in a world of unique persons and limited knowledge a special talent was required in order to penetrate the web of human interactions. As far as Wolfe was concerned, he had that raw skill, and he called it genius.

The application of this inner ability was his art form and took the shape of a discerning selectivity. Though he was systematic in this pursuit, Wolfe eschewed the label of scientist and described his work as little better than searching for a coin in the darkness. To Wolfe the problems of detection were akin to a labyrinth wherein the end was reached only if one followed the "most promising paths." This capacity for selection was not a science, however, but an art and Wolfe saw himself as "an artist or nothing." He proudly annointed himself in this way because, in art, "one of the deepest secrets of excellence is a discerning elimination." His talents for judgment were confined in a realm where scientific exactitude was an impossibility, but a perceptive genius, like Wolfe, could construct recreations which his logic and senses told him resembled the events of the real world, the world of things and people.

In order to exercise his talents and display his art, Wolfe had to give

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credence to the possibility of verification and the abilities of people to perceive consistently. His task was to receive facts, digest them, and arrange them in ways that led to conclusions that were logical results of the combinations prepared by Wolfe. This was why he instructed a client in *The League of Frightened Men* (1935) "to reject all suppositions, even painful ones, until surmize can stand on the legs of fact." That these conclusions grew out of facts was made clear when Wolfe told another client that what he unearthed was "of necessity contingent on what has been buried. . . ." He could not perform without facts but could not create them, himself. He therefore relied upon accurate communications and honest recountings of events, which gave him a "deep aversion to being deluded." In this light, the cases of Nero Wolfe become the records of an artist striving to recreate scenes by applying his genius and imagination to a seemingly random array of perceptions.

As an artist Wolfe considered himself entitled to "his own conceit." Part of his conceit was to ennoble his art form as an instrument of civilization. Though he believed in cyclical variations of social value, Wolfe permitted himself an estimation of the origins of civil society. He argued in *Too Many Cooks* that, in ages gone by, people had understood that it was "impossible for a man to protect himself against murder" which was easily accomplished, "so it was agreed that men should protect each other." Giving this version of the origin of civil society Wolfe generally deplored physical violence which he considered "beneath the dignity of a man" and corrupting of all that it gained. Furthermore, he argued that persons who lived humane and civilized lives exercised "decent and intelligent control of the appetites which we share with dogs." In one sense then, Wolfe saw himself as a servant of civilized traditions and social morality.

Wolfe could also justify his assaults upon murderers from a more philosophical angle. A murder might be seen as a violation of individual freedom, as a unilateral declaration of war upon the ethic of Wolfe's relativistic world view. As far as Wolfe was concerned a search for personal vengeance "would be accepting the intolerable doctrine that man's responsibility is to his ego." That, he exclaimed, was the policy of Malenkov, Tito, Franco, and Joseph McCarthy and Hitler before them. It masqueraded "as a basis for freedom [but] it is the oldest toughest of the enemies of freedom." Wolfe declared in *The Black Mountain* (1954) that the essence of humanity was freedom, without which it lost its identity. Without freedom, humans lacked choice, and without choice, in Wolfe's scheme of things, life was neither absurd nor living.

Of course, the ultimate denial of choice was its termination through death. As a solution to the issue of which option to choose, Wolfe considered death perfect:

> *A man's time is his own only by sufferance. There are many ways in which he may be dispossessed: flood, famine, war, marriage—not to speak of death which is the most satisfactory of all because it closes the question finally.* (Fer-De-Lance).

Yet, death was not equivalent to murder, which he considered both melodrama and tragedy. Therein lay the nub of Wolfe's conceit. When he set out to ensnare a murderer he could see himself not merely as a worker, not even solely as an artist, but as a representative of modern civilized morality. Throughout his career Wolfe emphasized the importance of saving lives, preventing unnecessary violence and accepting the limitations imposed by civilization on murderous urges. Wolfe's interpretation of his art, and its role in society, raised detection beyond the level of either intellectual or sordid puzzle solving. With Wolfe as its spokesperson, fictional detectives emerged as preservers of individual freedom in a world where interdependence and interference had grown commonplace and normal.

Wolfe exemplified his purpose in his style of detection, which also grew out of his broader worldview. Just as he deplored interruptions of other persons in their life pursuits, so did he also excoriate any attempts to limit him in the performance of his art. A free man, he allowed only his own judgement to dictate the extent of his investigations, whether he offered the FBI or a powerful underworld leader. Furthermore, his self-proclaimed freedom imbued Wolfe with a degree of ruthlessness that permitted him to flaunt various formalities, including legal processes that threatened to turn justice into a circus of the grotesque. For this reason he often opened the way for murderers to escape, as in *The Red Box*, from the "ghastly and prolonged struggle" demanded by the legal system. The escape usually was suicide, which, ironically, symbolically joined together the complexities of Wolfe's thoughts. He acted freely and so did the guilty, whom he uncovered. At the same time he served the dictates of the social contract, while denying the ability of anyone to plan rules for all conceivable situations, including ones where justice was at issue.

By his rejection of complicated legal machinery Wolfe attested to the function of the fictional detective in the modern world. This self-determination of the proper avenues of justice was also characteristic of such diverse confreres as Sherlock Holmes and Mike Hammer. In each case, the detective was able to solve problems that outwitted the machinery designed to deal with them. They also were willing to decide, on some occasions, what form justice should take. Yet none of them violated the trust placed in them by the traditions of civilization: only the guilty were made to pay penalties. This combined flaunting of institutions and deliverance of justice made the detectives acceptable, palatable and indeed delicious to modern readers. Wolfe's statements of philosophical relativism help explain both the function of detectives and their popularity. Detectives were made possible because the world had grown complex and confused. While all institutions grew suspect, these individuals, by their implacable genius and their defiant freedom, remained unshackled and, therefore, able to respond to a complex universe. Their success was the fulfillment of the promise of the relative universe to all of its inhabitants: each of us can see the light, each in our own way and each as truthfully as any other. In the absurdity of detective fiction modern readers have found the refuge promised by a world of confusion but at the same time denied by it. Unlike our own solutions, those arrived at by the detectives are lasting, clear and satisfying.

Arnold Jaffe

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THE LAST OUT

I looked out my fourth story window. Down in the streets I could see nothing but garbage. The cans were filled with garbage, there was garbage in the gutter, garbage strewn all over the sidewalks. Garbage. Garbage. Garbage. But I was used to it. The garbage of the city came through my office every day. Pimps, pushers, con men, junkies, bookies, muscle men, bodyguards, crooks. I'm a private dick. And I don't mean stud.

I wasn't expecting anything that day except bills in the mail. I certainly wasn't expecting the babe that walked through my door that morning. She was about 5'4", luscious long blonde hair, and a figure that wouldn't quit. She was quite a dish, like the kind my mother used to serve meatloaf on. She gave me a look I felt below the waist. My feet often get that tingling sensation.

She made her way across the office. Before I could say a word, she kissed me passionately. So passionately she chipped two of my teeth. I pulled myself away.

"I'm looking for my husband," she said.

"Where did you think he was, in my mouth?" She ignored my query.

She turned from me. I heard the sniffling sound that comes from all of them. And then out came the handkerchief. I'd seen this trick before. She was going to make a quarter disappear.

"Are you a private detective?" This kid was intelligent.

"No, I'm a computer programmer."

"This is no time to joke." She was right. It was before noon.

"All right, honey. Suppose you give me a little background. Who is your husband and when did you last see him?"

"My husband is Sir Hubert Garland, the millionaire and Swiss yachtsman. I last saw him two days ago. He got angry over a card game and left in a huff. I thought he would take a cab. He had been playing solitaire and I was worried he'd do something drastic. And now I can't imagine what has happened to him." She burst into tears.

"Save the waterworks, sister. I'll see what I can do. I'll need a retainer, let's say two hundred ducks."

She got out her purse and handed me two crisp hundred dollar bills. She obviously hadn't heard me say ducks. It was just as well. I didn't need the eggs.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Strecker." It was the first time she had mentioned my name. Even for a while I'd forgotten it. Dave Strecker, Private Eye. That's what it said on my door. At least, I thought it was my door. If not, I'd been in the wrong office for six years.

"I'll do what I can, honey. And just for the record, what's your name?"

"Grace. Grace Garland. Mrs. Grace Garland."

"If you had one more name, you could be a law firm. I'll keep in touch, dear. You really haven't given me much to go on. Anything else you can think of, even if it doesn't seem important now?"

"Oh, yes. His favorite President was Andrew Jackson. Does that help?"

"Could be important." I didn't want to break her heart. Old Hickory has been out of office for a few years.

She closed the door behind her. Had she closed the door in front of her, she would have still been in the office. But that was none of my business. I didn't know where to begin looking, so I opened my desk drawer. He wasn't there, but I needed my gat anyway. I put a fresh clip in, and kicked on the safety. The safety was a useful little gadget. I'd used one ever since the time I whipped out my gun on the street and shot a street car conductor. Very messy.

Being a yachtsman, her husband might have headed for the yacht basin. That's where all the yachts were kept, but not necessarily the basins. I made my way out of the office to the elevator and then down to the street. My car was parked around the corner of the building. I turned the corner and saw something I'd seen a hundred times before. Fat Lt. 'Skeez' Walker and two hot shots from downtown. I could see I wasn't going anywhere, so I thought I'd chin up and see how little of my time I could get them to waste. The best way to deal with these mugs was to be polite and answer their questions.

"You know Lt., you're too fat for one person. You ought to subdivide."

"Still cracking wise with me. Strecker, you'll never learn." He spat at my feet.

"Thanks for the shine, skinny. What can I do for you and your two dime-a-dance chorus boys?"

"Where were you going, sweetheart?"

"Was I going anywhere? Why Lt., according to Zeno, I wasn't even moving. Don't you know about Zeno's illusion of movement thesis? You look like a philosopher."

"Zeno was queer." By God, he *was* a philosopher.

"Lt., how about not leaning against my car. You're bending the axle. You know, I wouldn't say you're fat, but your shadow weighs more than I do."

"Put the cuffs on him, boys. Henny Youngman's coming downtown."

"We are downtown," I said.

"Then we're going uptown." My ploy had failed. He was too quick for me.

Walker jumped in the front of the car. I sat in the back between Hope and Crosby. These guys were stimulating conversationalists. They hadn't said a word yet. They'd do their talking in the room upstairs downtown. I'd seen it all before. Hope looked like a rubber hose man. Crosby was the feather type.

"Say Lt. why the social visit? If you wanted to ask me out, why didn't you call?"

"Shut up." It was Hope.

"Good comeback, pal. Hey Lt., I didn't even see your lips move. And who says Charlie McCarthy is a dummy?"

Hope had a short fuse. I should have lit his eyebrows. But when you're sitting on your hands, there are very few things you can do. Hope had both hands free and he buried the left one in the pit of my stomach. I doubled over. Then I tripled over. If this kept up, I'd multiply myself out of the car.

"Hands off. At least until we get downtown to the room upstairs." It was Crosby. They were both giggling. Stereophonic laughs. I did what I do best in those situations. I puked on Hope's pantleg. He was all set to hit me again, but Walker stopped him.

"No fair getting a head start, Sgt. Save dollface for all of us." This brought gales of laughter to this band of hyenas.

We pulled up in front of the police station. Walker got out first and strutted around. The Hope dragged me out of the back seat, and Crosby got on one side of me and piloted me into the station. The desk sergeant, Sgt. Don "Iggy" Martino was there to heckle me as I came in.

"Hey gringo, couldn't find a steady job, huh? We've got a janitor opening." The boys started to yuk it up again.

"You know Martino," I said, "LA was a better place when you Mexicans stayed in your old neighborhood."

"What old neighborhood?" He was puzzled.

"Mexico."

The laughing stopped and I got a quick

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feeling of revenge. Hope and Crosby still had me by the arms and started taking me upstairs. Upstairs. I was familiar with it. The last time had been about a year ago. The Maudlin case. A midget had been killed in an icebox. They tied my name into it somehow. I was brought to the room upstairs downtown and stuck in a small wooden chair. They made me listen to Father Coughlin.

I still feel the pain when I think about it. After they saw that that wouldn't break me, they made me listen to old Abbott and Costello routines. For weeks after, when people would say "Are you a good private eye?" I would answer, "See my heel? I ran that down."

But I knew this would be different. No gags, no gimmicks. They wanted answers and they wanted them fast. It was going to be a hot and nasty afternoon. They steered me in the room and sat me down. Walker told Bob and Bing to leave my cuffs on. It looked like he wanted some target practice. He leaned over and snarled in my face. He smelled like a brewery. The boys took their positions; one at the window, one at the door. It was showtime.

"Strecker, I want answers and I want them fast." I told you.

"1894. The agricultural South. The St. Louis Browns. Mitosis." Those were pretty good answers, but I had a feeling they didn't pertain to his questions.

"Those aren't the answers I wanted," he screamed. I was psychic.

"Perhaps you already know," said Walker, hardly able to contain himself, "that Sir Hubert Garland has been found dead in the Golden Goose Motel. His head was crushed by an anvil. And you know something about it."

I tried to get a word in, but Walker would have none of it. He continued:

"We know his wife came to you this morning. Now perhaps she let you in on a few facts. And perhaps for a fee you helped her take a powder. That makes you an accessory after the fact. That can get you 10 years in Leavenworth."

"Or 11 years in Twelveworth. Or five and 10 in Woolworth," I said, repeating Chico and Groucho's best exchange in *Duck Soup*. But Walker was no Marx Brothers fan, and my humorous outburst was met with lewd remarks.

"Strecker, I'm going to ask it once and once only. Where is Grace Garland?"

"Are you only going to ask it once?"

"Yes."

"OK, let me go. Oh, by the way, do these bracelets mean I can't go out with other guys?"

"Dammit Strecker, where is Grace Garland?"

"No fair Lt., you asked twice. Look, I know the law. Not only don't I have to answer any of your questions, but I know that it's illegal to throw a pair of shoes at a bridal couple in Colorado." I figured this should really throw him. My legal knowledge didn't impress him, though, and he poured himself a cup of coffee.

Hope figured it was his turn to play the tough guy. He came over and stood to my right. I thought he was going to make with his dukes again, but Walker waved him off. Walker came from behind the desk and thought he'd try it again.

"You can't get out of this one, Strecker." He had quieted down.

"Well," I clipped back, "you're the same type of person who would have told me I couldn't fit the word 'garbage' into the first paragraph eight times."

"Strecker, just sing for us."

"Lady of Spain I adore you . . ." I never finished the first stanza. My crooning earned me a cup of coffee in the face. Without sugar. Just my luck.

"That's all, boys. Book him. Mr. Strecker is going to be our star boarder."

"Book me? for what?"

"Suspicion."

"Suspicion of what?"

"Suspicion of the hacksaw death of Señor Ramon Delgando of Bolivia." When they want you on suspicion, they can get you on anything.

I spent an uncomfortable evening in the city cooler watching the cockroach races. Everything was going fine until some obnoxious drunk rolled over on the lead cockroach in the fourth race. I lost five bucks. I decided to get 40 winks, but my eyes got tired so I went to sleep.

In the morning, I felt a size 10 in my ribs. It was Crosby.

"Get up, Strecker. You're free. Charges have been dropped. Collect your property and get the hell out of here."

Something was wrong. Dead wrong. The city boys don't give you the royal treatment like they'd given me and then just let you walk. I stumbled over to collect my property, and saw the reason why. Across the room, going through

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the booking process, was Grace Garland. I rushed over to talk to her. But she silenced me with a wave of her small, demure hand.

"Don't say it. I know what you're thinking. But I had to do it. He lied to me all these years. There are four i's in Mississippi. And besides, Switzerland is landlocked. He was left-handed and I thought it would look like suicide." She started again with the tears. This time I didn't bother to stop her. I picked up my gun and wallet and headed for the door. But she stopped me.

"Mr. Strecker, one more question."

"Shoot, honey." When I realized what I had said, I dove behind a filing cabinet. Peeking over it, I saw she was unarmed.

"Mr. Strecker, why did you call this whole thing 'The Last Out?'"

"I'm a big LA Dodgers fan."

"The Dodgers are still in Brooklyn. They won't be here for another 16 years. This is 1942."

She was right. I felt like an idiot. I stepped out into the morning drizzle. Well, they say hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, with the exception of a porcupine in heat. It was going to be a lousy day. I lit up a cigarette and took a long drag. I coughed violently. And then I remembered; I don't smoke. I never had.

Brian J. Bell

Brian J. Bell is a free-lance writer living in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Correspondence, *from page 7*

Appropriate technology

To the editors:

"Appropriate Technology" by Ken Bode (*TNR*, June 11) would tend to suggest that I regard the whole field of appropriate technology as a "boondoggle." I really would not want to be misunderstood on a matter of such importance to the developing world, and to the efforts of the United States to assist in the economic development of that world.

Few things are more important to our efforts to assist societies in the less developed countries than our ability and determination to make available to them the kind of technology which is appropriate to their stage of economic and educational development. I have seen first hand the examples of the success of this effort in the Sahel region of West Africa where village blacksmiths are being trained to make and repair simple steel plows, which enable farmers for the first time to till their fields using animal traction, rather than a hand mattock. The result is a crop yield three and four times anything previously experienced in the area. Hundreds of other examples might be offered.

My concern was not at all the very sound and important concept of appropriate technology. But I am concerned that a publically funded, privately controlled organization called Appropriate Technology International not become a boondoggle and waste public funds.

If this were to happen the victims would be the American taxpayers and inevitably the credibility of the light capital technology approach. I want to assure that the program not be discredited in the public eye and in the eyes of Congress.

John J. Gilligan
Administrator
Agency for International Development

Time has told

To the editors:

Robert Stinson's review of Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* (*TNR*, July 9 & 16) brought to mind a comment made to me while I was a reporter for the *Cincinnati Enquirer* some years ago by Murray Seasongood, the nonagenarian veteran of the reform movement that ended the era of Boss George Cox.

Mr. Seasongood told me that he more than once had tried to get Steffens to acknowledge that Cincinnati had beaten the Steffens conviction that reform could not sustain itself even if it did win an election because the reformers couldn't stay in the race against the tougher-minded politicians. Steffens said, in effect, that time would tell.

Well, I don't know what Steffens would say today if he were able to return to the city he once termed the worst governed in America, but Mr. Seasongood, at last report, remained active—and the theater built to memorialize Boss Cox recently was torn down.

Emil Dansker
Bowling Green State University
School of Journalism

TRB, *from cover 2*

says Jan Tinbergen, Nobel laureate in economics. The periodical press is becoming aware of this. In June Gene Lyons in *Harper's* ("Inside the Volcano") forecasts an eruption. Farm workers earn less than $15 a month, he says, and Mexico has the largest external debt in relation to gross national product of any nation in the world.

"What Illegal Aliens Cost the Economy" is outlined in alarm in *Business Week* (June 13) which figures that one year's illegal influx from Mexico will offset the entire job-creating effect of the Administration's stimulus package.

Many think the Mexicans' silent invasion can't be stopped; the US is not prepared to take the steps necessary. Certainly the pathetic army of border officials at present can't do the job. One proposed solution is to help make Mexico more prosperous, give it economic aid and stimulate jobs that will keep workers at home. This theory is advanced in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs* by Professor Richard R. Fagen, who argues that it's the only hope:

"If such programs are not forthcoming," he declares, "all the electronic gadgetry, registration cards, fines to employers, and forced deportations that the US can muster will not keep Mexicans at home."

It's a question: Is America stern enough? In Europe, France has sent back her laborers from Southern Europe; Germany has given tickets to Turkish labor battalions. But they are hard-boiled about this. The US is a nation of immigrants; presently six to eight million illegals are believed to be here and by one estimate about a tenth of Mexico's population lives illegally in the United States.

So that's the choice for America and it's a big one. A Gallup poll in April found 82 percent favored punishing employers who knowingly hire illegals. But how firm is this feeling? How strong is Carter?

The Ford Administration issued a 244-page report on illegal aliens. It found that they compete "particularly with the minimally skilled and underemployed" (like New York looters). The illegals produce "underground communities of people whose existence depends on evading and avoiding contact with the law and with government in any form." Will America do anything about this, or let it slide?

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Washington Diarist

Demand and Supply

The press mirrors the world's madness and often adds to it. A few weeks ago I read, in the *International Herald Tribune*, a *Washington Post* story headlined

Another World Food Crisis:
This Time, Too Much Grain

Of course there is no surplus. The 450 million people (a conservative estimate) who live on starvation diets could easily eat up this excess of 40 to 50 million metric tons. But there seems to be little way, and less concern, to get it to them. The free economy surely won't work in this situation; the invisible hand does not provide money to those without it. And money is precisely what the crisis is all about, not least to the planned marketeers, such as Secretary Bergland. They are worried about falling wheat revenues, the disaster level being 1972 prices. So America is likely to relieve the distress by "idling" 10 to 20 percent of our 80 million acres of wheat land. That'll keep the prices up and the bellies swollen. Why the government isn't trying to push the prices down (even with temporary agricultural subsidies to farmers) is beyond me. We might then begin to renegotiate world commodity prices reciprocally downward, starting with the continuing OPEC oil heist that fuels everybody's troubles.

The "iron rules" of both the free market and the controlled economy are confounded by the criminal avarice of a few petroleum potentates. There is an oil glut—three to six million barrels a day, we're authoritatively told. But this surplus portends no collapse in price structure. Blithe spirits, our good Saudi friends are. We have helped them rig it so that on the very day the financial press was reporting the huge petro-surplus, the Saudis could announce that they and their satellite emirates are upping the price of oil a mere five percent. To keep demand up, no doubt.

The poorest of the oil poor countries often are also the poorest of the food poor. Not many of them stint on having a military strong enough to tyrannize the locals and terrorize the neighbors—plus some. Which means that they mortgage their poverty to fuel their tanks, fly their planes and oil their guns. It would be a most benevolent test ot detente, I think, if the great powers were able to agree to sell no weapons (a few policemen's pistols aside) to countries that can't feed their own people. But it won't happen.

Time **magazine is one of the world's great powers.** It creates political facts, establishes styles, fashions language. Its executives are eagerly received, almost as equals, wherever the mighty sit. Last week, however, *Time*'s editor-in-chief, Hedley Donovan, and its managing editor, Henry Anatole Grunwald, cooled their heels in New York and Washington waiting to hear whether Menachem Begin would see them. He wouldn't. Among other reasons he'd come to America to persuade his critics and his country's adversaries. So his refusal wasn't because *Time* lucely (as they might put it) espouses that thoughtless wisdom about Israeli intransigence. Nor was he piqued by the personal vitriol with which *Time* greeted his election. What did offend him, though, was *Time*'s explanation of how his name was pronounced. "Begin (rhymes with Fagin)," *Time* instructed. As it happens, the "e" in Begin is a short "e" as in *peg* or *leg*. Apparently anything goes at the Rockefeller Center editorial offices, particularly if it's cute. Even if it's wrong—and also anti-Semitic. By his quiet display of dignity Begin may have earned himself the permanent enmity of some media barons who are not accustomed to have their decency questioned or their indecency counted. Would that other political leaders might occasionally also decline to play to that cheapest of balconies, the facile press.

Clientalism has always been a problem in the State Department. That's when ambassadors identify themselves so much with the countries they're posted to that they come to speak for them to us, rather than for us to them. It also happens in the press: that's certainly been the case for Henry Tanner's *New York Times* reportage from Cairo. In a recent account of the murder of a Moslem dignitary by religious fanatics, Tanner says this instance of urban terrorism jolted Egyptians. Why? Because urban terrorism seems to have been "the monopoly of young revolutionaries in western societies"—the Weathermen in the United States, the Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany, the urban guerrillas in Argentina and ultra leftist students in Italy." How insular can a correspondent be? Have Mr. Tanner and his informants forgotten the hospitality extended by Egypt to the PLO murderers of the American ambassador (as well as our own and the Belgian chargé) in the Sudan? And wasn't the 1975 Fourth of July bombing in Jerusalem's Zion Square urban terrorism? Or comparable actions in Israeli movie theatres, hotels, schools, housing projects? And for that matter, what about the rash of bombings going on in Damascus and Beirut during these very days? If anyone has a patrimony on urban terrorism it's the peoples among whom Tanner lives. It is they who have franchised it out to all and sundry.

So Huey Newton, back from his bail-jump exile in Cuba, thinks we don't need socialism in America. He may be right. But there are some people whose advice we don't need, whatever it happens to be. Newton is one of them. A media invention of the 1960s who made frustration an ideology, he continues to speak as if a slogan were a solution. That's true also for his former comrade, Eldridge Cleaver, who asks us all to make a millenarian decision for Christ and country. There are others. Rennie Davis, a gentle soul whom I met and liked in the peace movement, went from mass politics to the Maharaj Ji. Now he's selling insurance. His motive, he says, is the same: just helping people.

But there is no one whose ideas I care less about than Tom Hayden's. He's too flexible for me, having telescoped virtually the entire history of the left into a bare dozen years. From social democracy to revolution, from socialism in one neighborhood to wild in the streets, from third worldism to the counter-cultural sensibility. Now he's a Democratic pol in California, whose current line is working within the system. I can't forget that he was riding around Chicago, incognito in a *New York Times* car, when thousands of young people he'd inspired and inflamed to throw themselves on the cops were being gassed and beaten. No one remembers that, it seems. A few months before he'd stood as a pallbearer at Bobby Kennedy's funeral. That's the responsible image he and the press will invoke, as they stretch out the political half-life of another celebrity.

M.P.

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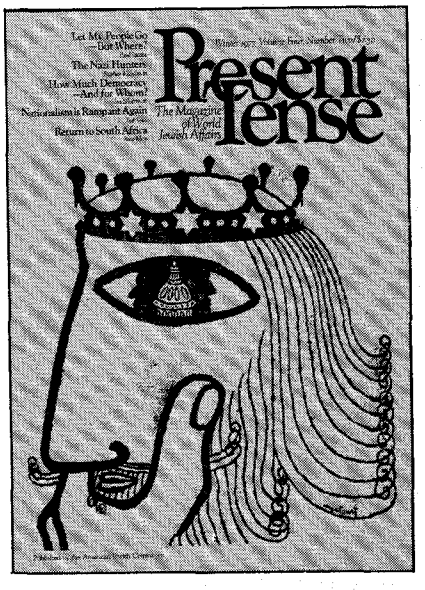

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On searching for roots in Eastern Europe: "Where was my mother's home? Where was the path she must have walked to the Narew River she had told me about? Where was the synagogue and where was the market place?" Sigmund Diamond, Spring '76.

On Jerusalem: "No place on earth offers so many delights to the eye, the ear and the mind as Kollek's Jerusalem, but one must find the time to stand and stare." Chaim Bermant, Spring '74.

On renewed interest in Judaica among young Americans: "The young people perceived themselves as survivors of the failures of Jewish education and the false values of America." Sylvia Rothchild, Summer '75.

On Israel's Nature Reserves: "It may be that General Yoffe's animals will somehow lead the people of the Middle East to peace one day. But the tanks were in the mountains, waiting. The real beast in the desert was still man." Robert Spero, Summer '76.

On being a Jewish poet: "The truest Jewish poetry will be written out of the inward preoccupations of people who happen to be Jews." M. L. Rosenthal, Winter '76.

On the Persian Gulf arms race: "The ramifications of what is happening... extend from the Caspian Sea to the Suez Canal and from the African Coast to Pakistan." Tad Szulc, Spring '75.

On Israel's Arab intellectuals: "I am an Israeli but I cannot be a Jew." Naomi Shepherd, Spring '75.

On American foreign policy: "American companies, which for so long we have considered 'our companies,' have in fact become the policing agents of the Arabs' boycott against the U.S." Paul Dickson, Spring '74.

On South Africa: "To live with such a system of laws, with certificates of racial purity, with leaders who admired Hitler, to live in South Africa as a Jew and to be silent and happy takes some special skills." Rose Moss, Winter '77.

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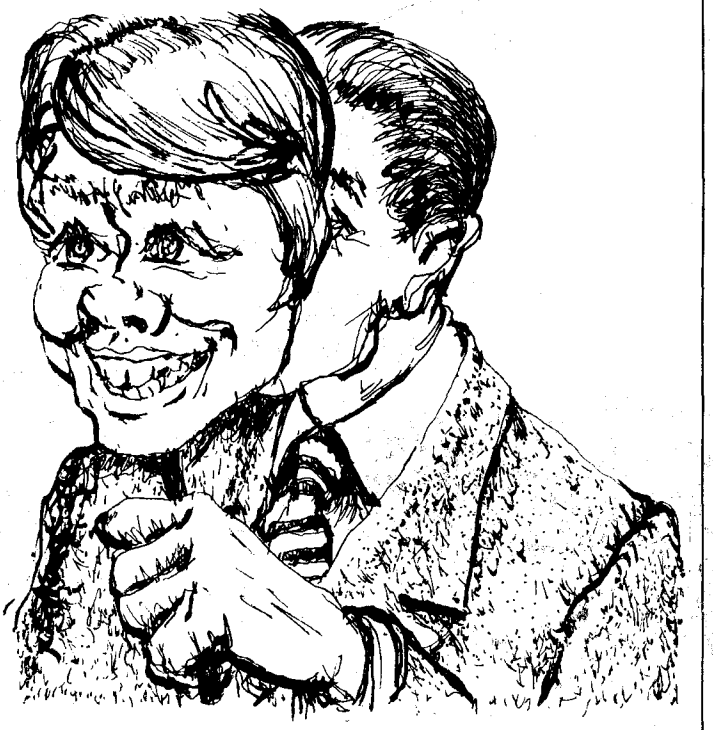

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